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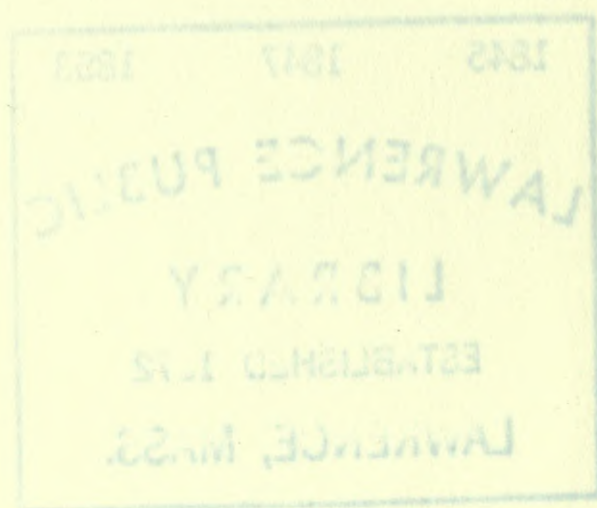
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"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

NEW SERIES.

VOLUME XIX.

FROM AUGUST 11, 1877, TO JANUARY 19, 1878.

Including No. 454 to No. 477.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED AT N^o. 26, WELLINGTON STREET;

AND BY MESSRS. CHAPMAN & HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1878.

"The Story of our Times from Year to Year."—BRASSLINGTON.

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CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

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NEW SERIES.

VOLUME XX.

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1878.

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THE EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1877,

ENTITLED

SHEPHERDS ALL AND MAIDENS FAIR,

WILL BE FOUND AT THE END OF THE VOLUME.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 454. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

OVERTURE. III. ROME.

CHAPTER XII. PAN AND SYRINX.

It is hard to realise, impossible to exaggerate, the bitterness of the triumph of his own Comus to Andrew Gordon. It meant to him the triumph of bad art, with himself for hero; and that, to him, meant the throwing back of the triumph of good art for years and years to come. It never occurred to him that he could really have created a work of genius, and in little more than seven days; when the men about him, whose lives were given to music, only showed symptoms of creative genius at the intervals of angels' visits, and most of them never at all. He knew that with this thing, Comus, he had taken no pains, that he had worked at it as a vile task, with shame and against the grain, and that therefore it was, by every law of workmanship, justly doomed to fail. And he, who followed art like a religion, had degraded himself into the most wretched charlatan, or had, at best, allowed himself to be made the tool of one. Had Comus failed, imposture would have failed, and justice would have been done; but now——! He was the only man in all London who would not willingly have given ten years of his life for that one night of intoxicating glory; and, with well-nigh incredible perversity, he was one of the very few to whom has ever been granted the double gift of youth and triumph combined. And what could he think of those who had crowned him, after seeing an audience, of that high

order which listens indifferently to the finest music, go literally raving mad over his Comus—his, Andrew Gordon's? Could music be but a monstrous piece of humbug after all—those who make it, cheats, and those who think they love it, fools?

The next day he stayed at home, denied himself to all visitors, would not look at a newspaper, and threw all his letters unopened into the fire. The next, he shook from his feet the dust of a city which had given such a welcome as this to an impostor who had only meant to tickle a few ears for a week, and cheat them of a few guineas for charity's sake, and had intended even in that to fail as he deserved. There was nothing for him now but to go abroad for a time, till he and Comus were alike forgotten, and his life made clean again from its stain.

Of course he went to Italy. Italy was then considered a musical country. And of course—it need not be said—disappointment followed him there also. He began to suspect, at last, that Music, like her sister Painting, had died before he was born. But, if so, what a career, or rather what a religious duty, lay before the man who saw this clearly! For surely music could not really die; she could, at her very lowest, be but the sleeping beauty in the wood, waiting for the prince to come. It was with awe, and not without much misgiving, that he began consciously to devote his life to the work of cleansing the Augean stables of their defilement, and turning them into a pure temple.

Gradually he mapped out the rest of his life, like a monk making his vows. That was needful; for art is so long and life so short, that every moment had to be rigidly economised and strictly accounted

for. He was to keep his name, for many long and patient years, from ever being known or heard. He must keep his purpose secret; for he now knew the world well enough to be aware of the advantages of being a monomaniac, and the disadvantages of being thought or called one. So many years of his life, calculated as nicely as possible, were to be spent in making himself master of all the means whereby the great masters of old time worked out their results, and sent them straight from the mind to the heart without depending upon noise or machinery. So long again he was to meditate upon the nature of a perfect work to be the standard of perfect art in all its branches, and fix the point from which all music hereafter, in order to be right and true, must spring; the perfect figure of pure music, stripped of all her tricks and disguises, and, by her very aspect, abolishing for ever the devices of tradesmen and charlatans. And then, at last, the great work must be begun, ended, and finished—and then, and not till then, it must be revealed to the world. And then, if glory came to him therefrom, he would welcome it without shame; if not, he would be content that his work was done.

It was the dream that is called madness when it fails, genius when it wins. And now, while looking into the dark eyes of Noëmi under the moonlight, his grand hope took a yet more definite form. A strange Carnival-trick of fate had brought him a beautiful girl, young enough to wait full twenty years for her prime, as pure as a new-born child from modern so-called music and all its ways, of the land where people have voices, and of the race that can use them. If she only had the possibilities of a voice and the shadowiest ghost of a soul, she must have been expressly made for the chief instrument of his great work. He might make of her whatever he pleased—into more even than the equal of the great singers whose glory has not died with their songs, because they never sang until they could sing.

When one is young, all fine eyes have souls and can sing.

He promised the ear-rings without noticing that the request might imply another sort of soul than he was bargaining for, and then, by making her imitate as well as he could the very unmusical notes of his own deep and inflexible voice, satisfied himself that she had a tongue fit for tuning. He made

her sit beside him on a fragment of marble; and she, with imagined gold ear-rings dangling in the air before her eyes, tried to sing them into being.

Noëmi's had not been the only heart on the Corso that felt a cold sinking, when the withered old man and the fat old woman crawled by. For holidays, alas! have to be paid for—or at any rate people think so; and there would have been far less finery on people's backs that day and a great deal less merriment in the air, if more peace of pocket, had it not been for that pair of scarecrows. In a word, the lean scarecrow was no less a person than Signor Giuda Laragna, of the Ghetto.

Now the Jews of the Ghetto are not as a rule rich, and most are poor. But Signor Giuda Laragna was reputed to be worth the weight, not of himself, for that would be nothing, but of his wife, in gold. He was a dealer in bric-à-brac, but he kept no shop and was never known to sell anything. Indeed his customers mostly carried away with them more money than they brought him. A business conducted on such principles sounds more philanthropical than profitable. But there are back stairs to the court of Plutus as well as to any other; and how he came by so many treasures of costume, considering the ecclesiastical cut of many of them, the saints and the cousins of cardinals alone could tell. In short, Signor Giuda Laragna was the most famous money-lender in Rome, except—for it is always right to be strictly accurate—one rival, who, being a Christian and a Gentile, had more opportunities and advantages than were open to a citizen of the Ghetto. Their clients called Giuda Laragna "Il Purgatorio," and his rival, Demetrio Colombo, they called "L'Inferno." "Il Paradiso" was not at that time represented by any usurer in Rome.

But on that especial day, however it might be faring with L'Inferno, it was Il Purgatorio himself who was in purgatory. The many sufferers from the disease of cent, per cent, seized the chance of applying to the Carnival that rule of its ancestor, the saturnalia, that permitted slaves to turn the tables on their masters. Many a snake in the shape of a jest could easily be hidden under the innocent-looking cover of sweetmeats and flowers. There is a real, literal, practical magic about a crowd everywhere, on the Corso no less

than in Trafalgar-square. It not only has the art of appearing and vanishing and reappearing in an instant at any given spot, but, according to its temper, is provided at any given moment with materials that may be roses or rotten eggs at will. No rotten eggs, indeed, appeared on the Corso. But, by some strange conjuring trick, whenever Il Purgatorio and La Purgatoria happened to approach a carriageful of masked young men, the bouquets and sugar-plums wherewith they had been pelting the ladies in the windows invariably turned to squirts and parched peas.

The crew of wild beasts under the command of Punchinello especially distinguished itself in this surpassing witty proceeding; and they were so grotesquely and completely disguised, or rather so openly revealed in their true nature as bears, that their fun was even better than humorous—it was safe into the bargain. Not one need fear revengeful recognition when he next came to ask for time. By the time the couple had slowly traversed the length of the Corso, their dominoes were nearly drenched, and their faces were red with the stings of peas. But never once had Il Purgatorio hastened his crawl, nor La Purgatoria relaxed one atom of her incessant smile. Morally, they might have been carved out of wood for any effect that these jests at their expense seemed to have upon them.

But when the Corso cleared itself for the horse-race, then said Il Purgatorio:

"It's a good Carnival! How many peas did you get in your face, Salome? You counted them?"

"I couldn't count the peas," she said with a still broader smile if anything. "There were too many. But I kept account of the times. It was just two hundred and eighty-three. And a good dose each time."

"Two hundred and eighty-three! I got no more than two hundred and thirty-nine—but then your face is ever so much broader than mine. It gives twice as good an aim. Why, what with those that didn't hit and scattered, they must have used all the peas on the Corso; and then the syringes—it has been quite a stroke of business, Salome! Ah, it would never have come into Colombo's thick skull to send such wares as that on to the Corso at the feast of fools! They've paid better than candles or confetti. I saw the fools buying them up like wildfire as soon as

they saw you, Salome, within fifty yards of them——"

"You, Giuda," smiled La Purgatoria.

"No, you, Salome. But never mind; I know every mask in Rome, and every man that shot a pea will have to pay for it more than twice over before he's done. It was quite an idea; I didn't think it would turn out half as well. Next year I'll send a whole shipload of damaged oranges on the Corso. You won't mind a few oranges in your face, Salome? I'll take care they're all soft ones—and it's only once a year."

They did not wait for the Moccioni. There could be no possible profit in walking unrecognised in the twilight—no doubt all the stock of squirts and peas had been exhausted already, and not even Il Purgatorio himself could do anything to increase the natural expenditure in candles. They turned their steps towards the Ghetto, and reached the gate well before curfew. Presently they reached the narrow street where stood the dilapidated, gloomy house, whence Noëmi had issued in the morning. The master raised his crutch-handled stick and struck three times, regulated like a signal, upon the door. After waiting about a minute, he struck again—the same three blows with the same measured interval after each of them.

They waited another minute. Then, "Noëmi!" called out the mistress in a shrill voice, that must have been heard across the Tiber. "Noëmi!—Are you asleep there?—Noëmi!"

Thrice more her husband knocked; but always in vain. He looked at his wife, and she back at him, with only so much of her smile left as had become chronic from persistent practice. The Ghetto was the safest and honestest corner in all Rome—except of course the uninhabited catacombs—and the Carnival was an honest time. But, nevertheless, somebody might have taken advantage of the holiday desertion of the Ghetto, to play some trick upon its richest citizen with instruments worse than syringes or dried peas.

It was a terrible thought. Noëmi might be murdered instead of only sound asleep, and the whole house plundered. La Purgatoria took hold of the iron handle of the door and shook it. In her shaking she gave it a push; it flew open, and sent her flying into the dark entrance with her head far before her heels. Her husband caught his toes in her skirt and flew after her through the door like a bat,

with his black domino flying open into the likeness of wings.

They extricated themselves from one another as they best could, rubbed their heads, and again looked at one another in too much dismay for immediate anger. Even the chronic remnant of her smile had, at last, been knocked out of the face of La Purgatoria. When they left in the morning for the Corso, that treacherous door had been barred, bolted, and chained as fast as door could be. And now it was open—and, what was worse, had been opened from the inside.

That meant that Noëmi was not murdered.

As if by the most wonderful magic of all that magical day, Il Purgatorio seemed all at once to lose his decrepitude, and La Purgatoria her unwieldiness. They scrambled and raced up the dark stairs. Presently they found a light, and went into every room. They found nothing, but they missed nothing—which was far stranger. At least they found nothing but a few nut-shells in the loft, and missed nothing but Noëmi.

"There is really nothing gone then?" asked La Purgatoria.

"Nothing," said Il Purgatorio, grimly. "Go down and chain up the door."

"And when the girl comes back?"

"She may come back; but she won't get in. Charity doesn't mean being obliged to keep a girl that opens the door to all the thieves and brigands in Rome, as soon as one's back's turned for an hour. It isn't her fault that there's the worth of a scudo left—it makes one creep to think of! Oh yes, she may come, and welcome, and break her knuckles on the door if she likes—it won't open so easy to her as it did to me."

"I'm sorry, though—we shall never get a girl so cheap—never again. She ate next to nothing, and never asked for more. There's the bread and the slice of sausage, that I left her for her dinner, unbitten to this hour. It has been a real charity to keep a girl like Noëmi."

"All I say is, you'll have to do everything yourself now, Salome. I'll never trust another, and as for her, I've done with her. Ah!"

They were standing in the dimly-lighted loft, surrounded by the wilderness of wonderful old clothes. Argus himself could not have distinguished one rag from another, where they lay heaped up together in every nook and corner. But the eyes of

Argus were, as everybody knew, nothing to those of Il Purgatorio, where the worth of a farthing was concerned.

"What is it?" exclaimed La Purgatoria breathlessly.

"If she's a hundred leagues away," cried out her husband, "I'll drag her back, and when she comes back I'll send her—a thousand leagues away! Look, Salome—look there!"

She looked; but her eyes were dim, not to say bleak.

"I see nothing—what, Giuda?—where?"

"That's it—you see nothing. You don't see the black lace mantilla—it's gone! Old Spanish lace made by the nuns in Cordova. I was going to sell it to the Queen of Naples, and it's gone. It's worth every thread in gold, and it's gone off on a beggar's back, and I shall never see it again."

"But she can be stopped; there's the law——"

"A rotten orange for the law! Oh yes, the law will stop the girl, sure enough, but I don't want the girl; I want my mantilla. Do you think the law would let a thing like that, worth a gold piece for every thread, go back to the Ghetto? If you do, Salome, you're a fool. They'd ask me questions about that mantilla; and, if I told them the truth, they'd keep it, and if I told them lies, they wouldn't let me have it back again. But I will have it back—and therefore I won't go to law; but I'll follow Noëmi all over the world till I do. Charity, indeed! A rotten orange for charity! I see; it is a trick of that scoundrel Colombo. He has bribed my own servant to plunder me. He will give her a promise, and get my profit out of the Queen of Naples. But I'll be even with him—him and her. Great Heaven! I have lost the grandest piece of lace in all the world for the price of a parched pea!"

It is an infinitely wonderful thing, the way in which two lives will set out from opposite poles, travel by diverging roads, and yet—contrary to all the laws of mathematics—meet in the same point, more surely than if they had originally started from the same. Andrew Gordon had started from a cotton-mill in Lancashire, had made a short but exciting voyage through intense enthusiasm, violent success, bitter disappointment, and renewed visions of coming glory. Noëmi

had set out from the Roman Ghetto, as the orphan dependent upon the charity of a couple of misers and usurers; had never even heard of such a thing as art, nor even of an outer world save from the gossip of neighbours. And yet, if they had set out from the same point and travelled by the self-same road, they would not have arrived together under the shadow of the Colosseum on that Shrove Tuesday. It was their divergence that had brought them there.

Long before the moon went down Gordon satisfied his most anxious doubts, that he had found in Noëmi all that his vision of the future still lacked of perfection. Her voice, as he had hardly dared to hope in spite of her eyes, proved, after a very few experiments, to need only the tuning and moulding of a master, in order to become an instrument fit even for him, and to express the great music that was to be. But more even than in her voice he rejoiced in the ignorance that had kept her from being spoiled by others, and in the poverty that might deliver her to him. She was surely the very reed that grew without a voice by the river-side, blown this way and that by the wind, a mere lifeless thing, until Pan came and drew such music from it that the whole world listened and wondered.

He talked to her as men who are the slaves of one overwhelming idea talk to others—that is to say, as if their one idea were the one idea of all creation. He talked of things whereof she had never heard or dreamed—far over her head, and up among the clouds, where she could no more follow him than she could literally fly. But it all sounded very grand, like part of the Carnival. At last he said, suddenly and in the same tone of command in which he had bidden her follow him from the Corso:

“You will not go back to the Ghetto?”

Not she! She had not followed him above the clouds; but she had been able to follow him very well—half way. After all, one does not gossip with one's neighbours, even in the Ghetto, without learning something. She had not heard of art, but she had heard of artists. She had never been to the opera, but she knew all about the opera-house; some of those very neighbours were chorus-singers themselves. Combined with these hints, he made her understand very well that the life of a great singer was all made up of liberty, joy, plenty to eat and drink, nothing to do, velvets, satins, ear-rings,

brooches, and scudi—in a word, that it was all one eternal Carnival, such as she had seen to-day. As Gordon talked, the ear-rings he had promised her grew from gold to diamond. And could all this be for her—her, Noëmi Baruc of the Ghetto, the slave of La Purgatoria?

Pan was breathing a soul into Syrinx—with a vengeance. And so ended for both of them that romance of a Carnival. Or rather, so it began.

JOHN BULL'S NEW HOUSE.

A CHANGE has come over John Bull. Once upon a time neither he nor his belongings were hard to please. Provided that his mulligatawny, cod's head and shoulders, and roast beef in winter, and his salmon and lamb in summer were the best of their kind, in perfect condition and judiciously cooked, his port-wine of proper age and temperature, and his sherry of a good “round” character, he was happy. As his fare was plain, so was his house—square as to shape, thick as to brickwork, ponderous as to furniture. There was a good, square, solid, heavy, respectable ugliness about his surroundings, which corresponded with his character. Old John was perhaps a little over-literal and heavy, but he was honest up to a certain point, and took an especial pride in eschewing the flippancies of life. He liked men's opinions to be square and on a sound foundation, like his dining-room chairs. The interior of his house savoured of mahogany and rosewood, all solid and good, innocent of veneer; and he liked his silver to be real, hating electro as the visible sign of all that was false and treacherous in a world already showing signs of decadence. Bull père is nearly extinct. Here and there may be found a fine old specimen, in wonderful preservation, but this type of old gentleman has been terribly thinned by the late spring and the east winds, and, bating an uncle—from whom the writer has expectations—he knows of but one specimen still extant among his tolerably large circle of acquaintance.

The gloom, ponderous respectability, and crushing genuineness of the English interiors of the last generation can only be realised by a visit to Bloomsbury, where in two or three old-fashioned houses may yet be seen the expression of the age which succeeded the comfortless

splendour of the Middle Ages, the tasteful luxuriance of the Renaissance, the gilded vulgarity of the Louis the Fourteenth, and the meretricious prettiness of the Pompadour period. There is no name for the peculiar style spoken of but the "Georgian." It represented excellently the genius of at least the first three Hanoverians, and must have suited the English people well enough, as they adopted it, and clung to it with curious tenacity, until the revival of mediævalism led the way to the present eclectic style of lining John Bull's nest. When mediævalism came into fashion, John Bull's house underwent a certain amount of renovation. His wife made away with his ugly but comfortable Georgian arm-chairs, and substituted in their place a regiment of picturesque articles of the prie-dieu kind, which pushed his knees up to his throat and hurt his back most fearfully. The fun of all this was that John's wife and daughters, having taste, persuaded the old gentleman that the new high-backed seats—the little-easy chairs as he dubbed them—were better for him than the hideous but luxurious old tub-chair he had revelled in for many years. Poor dear papa was afflicted with a tendency towards apoplexy, said Miss Bull; he should not be allowed to go to sleep after dinner, and the new chairs effectually corrected that dangerous tendency. This severe view of papa's post-prandial slumbers was brought to the mind of Miss Bull by the school of theology to which she had lately allied herself. A spinster of uncertain age, the worldliest of the worldly—she had of late taken to early matins, as a species of compensation for the dissipation of the evening, or rather night, before. As going to bed at three A.M., and turning out pale-faced and red-eyed at seven, in order to attend early service at St. Simon Stylites, appeared to Miss Bull a species of asceticism just severe enough to be fashionable, it was of course natural that she should wish to impose at least equal mortification upon her unhappy father. It is to no purpose that scoffers point out that old Bull is being hurried to his grave in his high straight-backed chair, and that his temper has never been the same since he was compelled to sit upright and listen to what he calls "symphonies and canzonets and things," instead of dropping quietly to sleep over a leading article. Even less heed is paid to the ribald remarks of Miss Jane Bull, a female

Gallio, who cares for none of these things. Miss Jane struggles against her mamma and elder sisters, but in vain. She protests that her elder sister, who is certainly not given to embonpoint, looks like a rag doll in her raiment of the latest fashion, and that it is "really quite too awful" to see her with her red hair and bilious complexion in a bottle-green dress. Miss Bull nevertheless has her own way, and one consolation is that she chops and changes that way frequently. No sooner had she worried her parents out of Bloomsbury into a Gothic villa at Kensington, without size, or light, or comfort of any kind, than she became a convert to the Queen Anne style, discovering all at once that combinations of red brick and white stone are the only domestic edifices on which the English eye can rest comfortably. The ribald Jane calls it the mutton-chop style of decoration, with its bulk of lean and fringe off fat; but sarcasm is thrown away, as every member of the household, Mr. Bull included, is anxious to escape from the Gothic villa, with its detestable staircases and general gloom. A lovely house is discovered about the middle of Putney-heath, not very handy to rail or omnibus, and requiring the addition of a couple of horses and as many servants to Mr. Bull's establishment. He grumbles, of course, but submits, and becomes the owner of a "perfectly lovely" Queen Anne mansion, of ruddiest brick and whitest coping, with great handsome bay windows, or rather window frames, carved and wreathed gables, mysteriously twisted chimneys, and a portico with abundant terra-cotta mouldings, and little squabby columns of granite to support the arch. It is a delightfully eclectic style of architecture, possessing the enormous advantage of giving the mind a wide range of activity while engaged in contemplating it. The windows carry one back to the age of Elizabeth, the twisted chimney-stacks to that of Wolsey, the carved gables to the genuine Queen Anne period, and the terra-cotta portico with the Byzantine columns to the Venice of Marco Polo. To some prejudiced minds it may appear that a structure of this composite character reveals the poverty of nineteenth-century invention, but Mrs. Bull and Miss Bull are in raptures. Bull only tries to make a stand upon one point. He insists, with insular dulness and directness, that, as windows are made not only to admit light and air, but

in some measure to be seen through, the best material for them is plate-glass of the best quality. Mrs. and Miss Bull are horrorstruck. The purpose of a window may be to admit air and light, that is such light as will not jar upon the highly strung æsthetic fibre—but to be seen through! Horrible idea! The scenery of Putney-heath is fine doubtless, and celestial harmonies arise in the artistic soul as the eye travels over the wide expanse of yellow gorse, and rests lovingly on the purple hills in the background. But all this can be enjoyed by going out of doors; while within, no one should think of looking out of window. Any such rash act would be a reflection on the arrangement of the interior, which should be so ordered as to retain the poet mind in a species of harmless ecstasy. Wherefore the not very large space left between the mullions shall be filled in with glass certainly, but glass of that dark bottle-green hue which serves the double purpose of refreshing the eye and permitting the profuse employment of colour within the apartment. Moreover, the bottle-green glass shall be divided into lozenge-shaped pieces, so that any attempt to look through it shall reduce nature to a tartan pattern. It is of no use for Mr. Bull to insinuate that when people glazed their windows with tiny diamond panes of bottle-green, joined by so much lead that a window contained as much opaque as diaphanous matter, they did so, not from artistic considerations, but because they knew no better and had no plate-glass, just as country squires came to town in a coach-and-six because the locomotive was yet unknown. This reference to the superiority of the railway over the old roads, or rather quagmires, of the bottle-green period is pronounced almost vulgar of Bull père, and his "pleasure dome" is adorned at immense expense with a fine collection of "bull's-eye" panes of the deepest hue. Submitting in high dudgeon, he finds a safety-valve for his ill-humour in the remark that the complexions of the female members of his family will, in a sea-green light, require "even more colour than they put on now," and then takes himself off without affording the chance of a reply.

Fashion having changed of late, Mr. Bull escapes the horror of living in rooms coloured in imitation of weak coffee, or gloomy céladon. The latter hue is reserved for the dado, above which extends a wall-

paper of strictly conventional pattern, sombre in hue, and designed with the express purpose of avoiding the representation of any natural object more graceful than a sunflower, a chrysanthemum, a camomile flower, or a marigold. The head of the family pronounces the effect "dingy" and dear, but by this time is crushed into a sullen state of acquiescence. His objection to the ugliness of the interior decorations of his house is met by the remark that the decoration has not commenced, that all that has been done is merely to put in the background for subsequent decorations. As the adornment, or, as he thinks, disfigurement, of his dwelling has already cost him a pretty penny, he buttons up his pockets, but, as the event proves, prematurely, for the intelligence of his family (with the exception of Miss Jane Bull, who prefers lawn-tennis, archery, and riding across country to South Kensington) is focussed upon one object, the extraction of a big cheque for blue-and-white china and Chippendale. Meanwhile he is put into good temper by being permitted to superintend personally the fitting up of the billiard-room. This important apartment has been designed by young Gargoyle the architect, and is like a Tudor chapel, with handsome arched roof, marvellous store of painted tiles, and a man in armour at each corner, the walls being adorned with rapiers, left-hand daggers, arquebuses, matchlocks, and other choice weapons; Bull père having been lucky enough to pick up the whole for a cheque of four figures. Mrs. Bull pleads hard that for the sake of consistency there shall be no divans—modern but comfortable abominations—round the walls, but, in their stead, delicious straight-backed settles of oak, or those backless seats of which the modern camp-stool is the lineal descendant. Mr. Bull has, in his own phraseology, "stood a good deal," but outraged patience rises against uncomfortable seats in his billiard-room. So that hated anachronism, the divan, is established in the billiard-room of Castle Bull, and the placid owner thereof is prepared to endure innumerable outrages. At first he kicks a little against blue-and-white china, and suggests that the precursors of the willow-pattern plate have no special interest for him, but he is gently wooed to the yielding point. His family condescend to reason with him. At a late hour he learns that his entire dwelling has been constructed with reference to the "decorative" em-

ployment of "blue and white," that all the money invested in dingy wall-papers adorned with bilious chrysanthemums is thrown away, unless he "lights up" the dreary expanse with cabinets of Nankin vases and rows of platters hung against the walls. Papa says, faintly, having the houses of æsthetic friends in his mind's eye, that plates are made to eat from and not to be hung against the wall; but his observation elicits nothing beyond a titter and a few sotto voce remarks that "poor papa is not in it," whatever that may mean. So a fashionable dealer is consulted, and the result is a cab-load of Nankin and Japanese blue-and-white, pending the arrival of some choice pieces that the dealer awaits from abroad. Not always will that astute trader bring forth his choicest wares on demand. He knows better, and prefers to let his hapless customer wander dejectedly about his shop—"gallery" he calls it—seeking for "hawthorn" and "powder blue with raised white figures," and finding them not, till in sheer desperation the purse-strings are opened, widely enough, for second-rate crockery. This performed, the skilled operator writes to his new client to inform him that in a day or two some great treasures will be in his possession, and that he should like Mrs. Bull to have the first sight of them. The unhappy lady is overcome by the "points" of the really handsome vases newly arrived from the Republic of Nowhere. She marks the beauty of their form, high-shouldered though it be, and admires the richness of the blue ground, dashed and splashed as it were by a master hand—a "magnificent colour-cadence," as Professor Dunkelwitz puts it. She goes into raptures over the elegance of the design and the graceful curves of the hawthorn sprigs—which, by-the-way, were not intended by the Nankin artist, who drew them some two or three hundred years ago, for hawthorn at all. And she cries aloud over the beauty of the glaze, the brilliancy of the white, and she pays a noble price for the "finest hawthorns in England." These treasures must be stored in a cabinet specially constructed to that end, for no risk may be run with china "positively unique"—that is bating a few thousand specimens in Holland and elsewhere.

The suspension of the blue-and-white platters against the walls of the Bull mansion, is an undertaking on which much genius is brought to bear. Professor Dunkelwitz is consulted of course, and so

is that wild enthusiast Algernon Fitz-crackell, who does not send his pictures to the Academy, nor even to the Grosvenor Gallery, preferring to reserve them for the admiration of his own particular friends. When Mrs. and Miss Bull, assisted by these gentlemen, have succeeded in so disposing their punch-bowls, dishes, and vases as to produce the maximum of "decorative" effect, Bull père is asked in a triumphant tone, what he thinks of the rooms now. It is perhaps hardly worth while to record his answer. There is something in it about willow-pattern plates, kitchen-dressers, and plate-racks; but it is better suppressed, although that enfant terrible, Miss Jane, laughs exceedingly, and declares, in her peculiar dialect of the English language, that "the governor is quite the cheeriest old bird" she knows.

Besides the "decorative" blue and white, there are other odds and ends of crockery, ancient and modern, all over Mr. Bull's new house. Entering the conservatory, one is startled by the apparition of two enormous blue dogs, apparently of oriental ancestry. Near these cerulean monsters reposes a yellow cat of portentous size, its huge jaws distended by a frightful grin—a Chinese variety of the real Cheshire article. These agreeable creatures are much valued by the æsthetic portion of the household, as supplying the necessary complement of colour to the general effect—heightened also by sky-blue and rose-pink flower-pots. Round about the halls and staircases lurk tall, long-necked Japanese vases, graceful and tasteful; then come more Chinese jars, more blue dogs and yellow cats, apparently keeping an eye on several gigantic herons, storks, and cranes, slightly out of place, perhaps, on a staircase—but this is hyper-criticism. Modern crockery is by no means confined to the outworks; so to speak, of Castle Bull. Every member of the family, save its head, has been painted on porcelain by the clever lady who has made this art fashionable, and their faces smile from the depths of enormous salvers. They are good likenesses, although purposely strong in outline, and are very skilfully painted, albeit Mrs. Bull would perhaps have looked better against a cooler background than a clump of peonies, and Miss Bull's auburn hair hardly needs an aureole of sunflowers.

The crockery actually used by the household is of the most fashionably artistic

kind. Old-fashioned "geometrical" designs are abandoned; that is to say, it is now held a crime to put any ornament whatsoever in the middle of plate, dish, or cover. Instead of the dull uniformity of Sèvres and old Worcester, the new school imitate—after a fashion—the artists of Japan. Wherefore butterflies, and egrets, herons, and bulrushes crop up now on the side of a vegetable dish, and anon on the edge of a plate; charming the eye—so protest the connoisseurs "with infinite variety." Mr. Bull takes the liberty of dissenting from this view, and holds that what he calls "the slap-dash style" of ornament makes everything look lop-sided—and that the "variety" is imaginary. "Stuff and nonsense about Japanese variety—nothing of the kind—they can't produce anything without that confounded mountain Fusi—what-is-it in the middle, and as for the long-legged bird with the bulrush by his side, I have seen him a thousand times. The only variety is, that sometimes he stands on one leg, sometimes on the other." Whether the constant contemplation of art in various forms tends to soften the ruggedness and cruelty instinct in the human bosom, may be doubted by those who have studied the history of the Italian republics, and remember that the French king who invited Benvenuto Cellini to Paris, and our English Harry, the patron of Holbein, understood the "sacred fire" best as applied to heretics. At any rate, it has not abated the downright-ness of Bull père to any perceptible extent. Yet he is clothed—"wrapped, and thoroughly lapped," as Bishop Still has it—in art. Not only does he dine from off porcelain adorned with the image of the creatures he devours, but the cold water, of which his consumption is not great, and the hot, which forms part of the "materials" of the evening's final libation, are brought to him in curious jugs, some of valuable Grès de Flandres, others of the handsome work known as Doulton ware. To all this he submits with a fair semblance of cheerfulness, and is only occasionally given to rebel on the subject of table-glass and decorations. Miss Bull, who has a genius for these things, has built up a strange lamp. A punch-bowl serves, when turned over, as a base for a Nankin jar to hold the oil, and while this centre-piece is to the fore, its inventrix will suffer no flowers but primroses, daffodils, or yellow roses, with a view to the celestial harmonies of colour evolved from blue and

pale yellow. On the subject of glass she is even more tyrannical—the bottle-green fever being very high on this subject. Now her father has a vulgar idea that glass, when in the form of a vessel for holding good liquor, should be as thin and transparent as possible, to the end that the colour of the wine—in his opinion an important object—should be seen. He is not bigoted, however, and when it became customary to engrave crests upon drinking-glasses, never grumbled at the expense; remarking at the time, that there was compensation in all things, as the new-fashioned glasses held nearly twice as much as the old. But he "shies," as Miss Jane states the case, terribly at the array placed at his side of late. There is a Venetian glass to begin with, towering above a tall stalk as if it had run to seed, stuck all over with things like jujubes or brandy-balls, and holding very little sherry. Next comes a hock-glass of unwholesome yellow colour, but fairly capacious, of good, jovial, round-bellied figure; and then a champagne glass—alas, how unlike the vast pail-shaped ones at the club!—of a sickly olive hue, with an unwholesome twist or spiral in it, and containing hardly enough Perrier Jouët to moisten the lips. It is not till the Lafitte and Romanée Centi are reached, that a transparent glass is allowed to appear, and even then the effect of the purple vine-juice is destroyed by a white thing like vermicelli, cunningly and maliciously spun into the fabric of the glass. The decanters alone show signs of common sense, being mostly of the good old tankard and flagon shape, with the handles and spouts set on at the right angle for pouring. The Bull family have some very good family plate; but this, much to the discomfiture of the heretic father, is only set upon the table on very grand occasions, and then only under protest; for it is a sin and shame to risk the existence of genuine Queen Anne, and early Georgian salt-cellars, and butter-boats, candlesticks, and flagons. As a rule, these precious articles occupy a cabinet, and excite the envy, hatred, and malice of collectors, whose mouths water at the sight of the heavy, square-footed candlesticks, and cradle-shaped saucières. Mr. Bull once very nearly provoked a revolution by suggesting that "the awkward old stuff" should be melted down, and a fresh service made by an eminent firm of silver-smiths.

In other matters pertaining to domestic

comfort and elegance, Mr. Bull's new house is not amiss. The collection of pictures by the old masters, made by his great grandfather under the advice of the famous Lord Chesterfield, has been sent down to Christie's, and sold to the highest bidder, whose offers were not very high for the oily madonnas and greasy saints and martyrs, for which English people at one time parted with their ready money very freely. Without pretending to any especial æsthetic culture, the master of the house knows a good picture when he sees it, and has collected a number of choice water-colours and a few cabinet pictures in oils. These, with a few fine bronzes, satisfy his requirements as to art. On one point he has stood firm against the tears of his eldest daughter, and the arguments, lengthy if not convincing, of Professor Dankelwitz. He will not have pictures of the early Italian school, with their golden backgrounds and wrynecked, over-trained devotees. They are, as he says, briefly, "beyond him." He has a weakness for drawing and perspective, and he will have naught to say to the Byzantines. He is greatly gratified by the recent revolution in favour of Chippendale, to the extinction of straight-backed chairs. The worthy Chippendale, who dwelt in St. Martin's-lane a little more than a century ago, was a cabinet-maker after Mr. Bull's own heart. Hardly original, for the best Chippendale furniture follows French forms very closely, it is yet conspicuous for a certain breadth of design and chastity of ornament. Sublime architects may laugh at the upholsterer who wrote to prove that an accurate acquaintance with the various orders of architecture, from the Tuscan to the Composite, is necessary to the man who aspires to design a good cabinet, chair, or table; but the works of Chippendale remain to show, that he really carried the principles of proportion out in practice. His chairs are cast in ample mould and are exactly adapted to the dimensions of Bull père. Whether they stand squarely on straight legs, or on limbs curved like unto those of a bull-dog, they are always firm, strong, and up to any weight. Daniel Lambert might have sat down, as he doubtless often did, in a Chippendale chair without the slightest fear of bringing its existence to a premature end. Wherefore Mr. Bull rejoices in his Chippendale, and for its sake forgets the startling needlework which pervades his house to almost the same extent as

crockery. It is, he thinks, quite of a piece with the wall-paper and the porcelain portraits on a lily or sunflower ground; but he is not exacting, and provided he gets two days' hunting in the week, and is not pestered about ecclesiastical squabbles, is a cheerful man and a tractable. He is more famous for his appetite than his jokes, but when he perpetrates a witticism it lasts him for a long time. He, so to speak, chews the cud of it with infinite delight. Between him and his daughter Jane there is current an epithet, which, if applied to his house in the presence of mamma and Miss Bull, would probably provoke lengthy remonstrance, for the old fellow and his madcap daughter never speak to each other of home save as the "New Curiosity Shop."

NETTIE'S BABY.

A STORY.

"BUT surely an infant like that can't learn anything?"

It was a large, long room, with white-washed walls and a bare, scrubbed floor. Round the wall was a row of desks and benches in rough unpainted deal, lined with girls, large and small, in dark brown dresses and white pinafores, with their hair cut to a regulation length and plaited in regulation tails tied at either ear. Lighting them, a couple of large windows, set too high in the wall for idlers to recreate themselves by looking out; but letting in plenty of pure April sunshine and a view of turquoise-blue sky, and the boughs of a cherry-tree laden with blossoms and waving in the fresh breeze without. In the middle of the floor a baby!

It was seated in the centre of a square patch of sunlight, broken by the flickering shadow of the cherry blossoms; and the sunbeams streaming in on it seemed to blend and melt with the wealth of tangled, curly gold, which hung over the round face and dimpled shoulders, and bring out the tender carnations of the little naked feet peeping from under the blue-checked frock, and held tightly in either fat, rosy-fingered hand. A child for a monarch to own, and Leslie or Leighton to paint; but only a pauper baby all the same, though seated there like a queen in the midst of her courtiers with a half-pout on the dewy, scarlet lips and a saucy gleam in the broad blue eyes, which laughed up at me from under their silky lashes as I looked at her.

"Baby is in disgrace, ma'am," said the teacher severely; "I wouldn't notice her

if I was you, a-taking off her shoes and socks in school like a casual ward's child. I was just saying she don't ought to be here if she can't be'ave herself."

Baby's eyes glanced curiously up at mine, and reading, I fear, some irrepressible mirth therein, laughed out more than before, turning away to contemplate with some satisfaction the little worn shoes and blue socks-lying on the floor beside her. She was evidently not a child with a keen sense of her own iniquities; but the teacher's eye was on me, and so, to repress my own unseemly levity, I made the remark previously mentioned. A movement among the girls ensued, and I saw that one was edging herself forward, and putting up her hand as if she wanted to speak. The teacher seemed to understand it so at any rate, for she answered somewhat sharply.

"Yes, Nettie, I know what you want to say, but you mustn't speak without you're spoke to. She's the baby's sister, ma'am," turning back to me, "and, I believe, does her best to train her into decent, orderly ways; not but what of course it's again all rules to have so young a child here."

"Poor little thing! Yes, indeed, I should think her too young to be trained," I said, stooping down to pat the golden mane, but as I did so my eyes turned on the sister, and I was startled by the anxious, pleading expression of those which met mine. They were very dark gray eyes, shining out with an almost weird-like depth from the framing of the sharp, colourless face and pale hair with an ashen tinge in it, and belonged to a crippled girl of about thirteen, with her shoulders drawn nearly up to her ears; a figure stunted enough for a child of ten, and hands so long and frail, as to look painfully out of keeping with the square red fingers of her companions.

"Your little sister, is she?" I said, and then as she answered with a quiet "Yes, m'm," and a curtsy, her eyes turning with a flash of irrepressible pride on the culprit, I added, kindly:

"You seem very fond of her. Is she the only one?"

"Yes, m'm, please. I haven't got ne'er another left me nowhere, an' that's why they lets me 'ave 'er here; but she ain't a baby indeed, m'm. She's near three years old, an' you wouldn't think how quick she are to learn, an' as good as gold, leastways generally," with a sorrowful glance at the tiny pink feet. "I don't know whatever

went wrong wi' 'er to-day, but it ain't often; teacher'll tell you it ain't. I don't doubt she'd do 'er countin' beautiful now, if so be you'd ask teacher to let her go back, please, m'm."

It struck me forcibly that it might be pleasanter for a chubby infant of three to roll about on the sunny floor, than to be seated on a hard bench to "do her countin';" but the wan-looking little elder sister evidently thought otherwise; so I made the request. The next moment the little one was hoisted on to a bench at her sister's side, where she proceeded to drop certain dried peas into holes drilled in a thick piece of stick at the rate of three, two, or one, according to order; a process in which I much fear she was not unassisted by the suggestive finger of the elder girl, perched like a frail old bird at her nestling's side.

Baby, however, seemed to look on the whole affair as a capital joke, laughing out in a little clear treble when she had achieved counting four peas into a hole, and echoing the teacher's approving

"There's a good girl," with a complacent

"Es, me's welly dood dirl now," which provoked me to kiss the round glowing cheek.

"Tell the lady your name, petsy dear," said Nettie, her own wan face quite radiant with my evident admiration of her pupil, and baby answered pertly:

"Aggalinairly," looking at me as much as to say, "There! what do you think of that?"

Nettie came to the rescue.

"Magdalen Mary, she says, please m'm. Quite a growed-up name too, ain't it, pet? An' I don't know what they call you 'baby' for, as if you weren't out o' long clothes, a clever girl like you!"

"Tever dirl lite me. Not in lon' toves at all," echoed Magdalen Mary, a sally which set off four or five of the girls laughing, and in the midst of which the matron led me out of the schoolroom to inspect the rest of the buildings.

It was nothing but a branch workhouse for junior paupers, though it went by the name of the "district school." A square, ugly, brick building, divided into two parts to separate the boys from the girls, with a flagged courtyard in each, surrounded by a covered corridor, where the children could play in wet weather; and standing in the middle of a somewhat extensive potato and cabbage ground, in the cultivation of which some of the elder boys assisted. It

stood on a hill a little above the village, and looked down on the red roofs and square church tower, half hidden by trees of the latter, and the subtle windings of the silver Thames beyond. A fair breezy place for children to find home and shelter in; and I lingered on the doorstep, while I asked a few questions respecting the strangely-contrasted sisters who had so interested me.

It was rather a touching story.

Nettie and her baby were the children of a very decent woman, once a servant in the village below the hill. Like too many of her class, however, she had married unfortunately; and, after struggling for ten years to support her drunken husband and young children, had died, worn out by privations and overwork, about six months after the birth of Magdalen Mary. There had been several other children between this last baby and the crippled girl, but they had all died off in different childish ailments; her husband had deserted her twelve months previously; and, when the poor woman died, it was found that so far from leaving anything for her children, there was not enough money in the old stocking under the mattress to pay for the coffin in which her worn-out body was carried to the grave. Naturally, Nettie and the baby had to go to the workhouse.

People were very kind to them, as they mostly are in cases of real trouble, let the world grumble as it will; and more than one offered to take Nettie—who was well known to be a child unusually quick with her needle, and handy and helpful in all household matters—and make use of her in minding children and other odd jobs for which her misshapen limbs did not incapacitate her; while one lady, for whom the mother had washed, wrote to say that she could get her into a "Home" for crippled girls, where she would be well taught and cared for, and put in the way of earning her own livelihood.

But both these offers necessitated a separation from Magdalen Mary—the rosy, dimpled babe, whom, almost from her birth, Nettie had taken under her special care, and fed, tended, and watched over with a perfect passion of love and devotion, while the mother was toiling at her needle for them both—the child whom, with her last words, that mother had confided to her, saying, "Take care of baby when I'm gone, Nettie. She's most fonder o' you than me already. Bless her dear heart!"

And to think of giving her up to any one else after that, and letting her grow fonder of other people, strangers who couldn't care for her one half as much as she (Nettie) did, how could the jealous little elder sister bear that? Or the still worse idea—so infinitely worse, indeed, that it left no room for the former—of baby pining, perhaps sick, perhaps ill-treated, with only some workhouse woman to look after her, while Nettie, her proper guardian, was being well fed and cared for far away.

No, if it must be separation or the workhouse for both, the workhouse it must be; and so into it they went, their united possessions tied up in an old blue coverlet, which had belonged to the children's cot as far back as Nettie could remember, and Magdalen Mary fast clasped in the elder's gaunt little arms—about the most helpless-looking couple that had ever entered that great receptacle for human want and improvidence. Yet even there, much as workhouses are abused, the sisters found friends and kindness.

"If I may only take keer on my baby myself," had been Nettie's one request, urged with such quivering lips and brimming eyes, and such a pitiful clutch at the innocent object of her devotion, that it would have required a hard heart to deny her. When her petition was granted, she showed herself so tremblingly-anxious to prevent its withdrawal, and manifest her gratitude, by giving a helping hand and eye to as many other babies as possible, and working doubly hard at school-hours into the bargain, that she not only became a favourite with the whole house, but, in course of time, won, by her good conduct and general proficiency, a title to be elected among the number of those damsels annually drafted off to that branch establishment—the district school—already mentioned, which was regarded by the junior inmates of the house as a sort of rural heaven, conferring dignity and respectability "in perpetuance" on the happy denizens of its red-brick walls.

But even with this coveted honour within her grasp, Nettie felt that she could not be happy, nor care to exchange her coarse blue-check gown for one of neat brown stuff, with a snow-white bib and apron, and a seat in the pretty village church where her mother had been christened, unless Magdalen Mary might go with her; and though that young person

was now between two and three years old—a healthy and precocious damsel, petted by the whole establishment, and queening it over all about her and her sister and slave in particular—she was much too far below the regulation age of five, to have any chance of being admitted into the district school on her own merits.

It seemed likely that, after going into the workhouse on the little one's account, Nettie would have to remain there for the same reason, and give up the superior prospects and advancement of the schools, as she had given up the home which her mother's friends had offered her two years back. But, as it happened, Heaven was kinder to the deformed girl than she expected. Perhaps the good name she had earned during the last two years stood her in stead; or, perhaps, the clergymen and others constituting the board had children of their own, and saw some argument beyond mere reason in the high-shouldered little girl, with the wistful eyes and thin hand fast clasping that of her pet and plaything. Anyhow, it was announced that the case was postponed till two months later for a decision. Babies, of course, were not eligible to the district schools; but if it could be proved that Magdalen Mary was not a baby, but a child capable of receiving tuition and dispensing with a nurse, the matter might be taken into consideration; and even with this glimmer of a hope, Nettie's spirits rose to such a pitch that, to have dashed them down again would have required the cruelty of a Nero.

Indeed, she worked hard to win the chance before her. It was from this day that baby ceased to be "baby," and became, by her sister's ordinance, Magdalen Mary, both names in full, and abbreviations sternly prohibited! Also she learnt, at the cost of all poor Nettie's play-hours, to point out A, B, C in an old primer, to count the pretty little pink fingers of one hand with those of the other, and to amuse herself by sewing large buttons on to a piece of coarse sacking with a needle carefully blunted by Nettie, lest she should put out an eye, or stab herself to the heart in the attempt; efforts which, being triumphantly displayed at the end of the two months, won the day by an overwhelming majority, and carried her under the wing of the flushed and happy Nettie into the haven where I found them.

This was the story which the matron told me; and simple as it was, I suppose

it served to fix the children in my mind; for though I left S—— the following morning, I did not forget them; and on my next visit to the little Berkshire village some twelve months later, one of the first things I asked my hostess, the vicar's wife, was as to how the sisters were getting on.

Mrs. Bartram smiled.

"Nettie and her baby? Oh, very well, till just lately. Nettie won the Bible prize for good conduct last Christmas; and Magdalen Mary is growing quite a big girl. Nettie, who has a very sweet voice, is to be taken into the choir at mid-summer, and is trying all she can to teach the little one to sing the Morning Hymn, that she may still have her at her side in church. I only hope they won't catch these horrid measles."

"Have you got them at the schools?"

"Yes, we have five down with them now in the infirmary. It is very provoking; and, I am sorry to say, Nettie has been twice in disgrace during the last few days in consequence. Her terror lest Magdalen Mary should take the infection seems to have quite put her beside herself. I am going up there now. Fortunately, my children have had it, so there is no danger."

"And I will go with you. I should like to see little Goldenhair again. She reminded me of my little Susy."

And so we set out, talking, as mothers will, of our children living and dead, as we walked up the breezy hill in the pleasant sunshine, with the vivid green leaves of the horse-chestnuts overhead opening their delicate fans and spires of pale green blossom, so soon to change into creamy white or rose-pink under the warmer rays of opening summer. Already, indeed, the snowy clusters of the blackthorn were beginning to fall under the pressure of the tiny emerald leaves quick opening behind; and the primroses, which a little while before had made a pale yellow sunshine in grassy banks and hedgerows, were fading beneath the ruddier gold of the real luminary, while down under the shadow of the woods, the bluebells made an azure mist upon the ground, the hart's-tongue unrolled its pale green blade, and the wild arum reared its yellow or dark red spike. It was a lovely day, one of those whose very freshness and purity seem to make sickness and death things too strange and far-off for realisation; but when we reached the schools, the grave countenance of the girl who

opened the door, and the graver looks of the matron who received us, soon brought our minds back to the sorrowful inconsistencies of life; and Mrs. Bartram's kind face grew sober beneath the news which awaited her. Four more children had sickened, and one was dead. It was a particularly bad form of measles; and the infirmary would soon be full at this rate.

"It's chiefly the little ones that has taken it as yet, ma'am," said the matron, "and their having so little sense makes 'em more difficult to manage. Our hands are quite full; an' I'm glad you came up to-day, for that child Magdalen Mary, there's no doing anything with her without her sister. She seems quite crazy."

"Nettie's baby? Has she taken it, then?" Mrs. Bartram asked, but was answered by a shake of the head.

"No, ma'am, it's Nettie herself. She sickened yesterday; and, indeed, I wasn't sorry when it came out on her; for she'd been that bad-tempered, not to say evil-behaved, for two days before, I couldn't think what had come to her. She went so far as to strike Sarah Watson, and was quite saucy to the teacher when spoke to about neglecting her work. We had to take away all her good-conduct marks, and threaten her with speaking to the vicar, which she minds more than anythink else; but yesterday evening the spots come out all over her, an' explained it; an' as I was saying, I'd be almost glad it was that, but for the little one, who kept the others awake by crying half the night for her sister, and has done little else all day."

"Poor child! I daresay she misses Nettie. I'll go and speak to her," said Mrs. Bartram, compassionately, and went off to the playground, whence indeed lusty screams were even then proceeding from a small golden-haired maiden, who was vigorously resisting the efforts of two bigger girls to lead her off somewhere, with shouts of: "Don't want oo. Wants my Nettie. Won't do nuffin 'less my Nettie comes."

There are some women whose very presence has a soothing effect, and the vicar's wife was one of them: I only waited to see the little scarlet cheek, damp with tears, pressed against her gown, and hear the passionate voice breaking into a gurgle of infant laughter, before I went in search of Nettie to see how she was faring.

She was in the infirmary, a detached white cottage standing at a little distance from the schools in a square plot full of wallflowers and scarlet-runners; and there

was something very pitiful in the change from the gold and ruby blossoms of the flowers gleaming in the sunshine, the brilliant blue sky and wind-tossed branches of the elms and larches, in all the first glitter of their April greenness, to the close still room inside and the ten little beds, five on either side, and all full, save that from which the small occupant had been carried to a narrower resting-place only that morning. Nettie's cot was between this and the wall, and on leaning over the poor child I saw at once that she was very ill, her face so swollen and marked as to be almost unrecognisable, and her eyes half-closed and glazed with the fever which burnt in her little thin hands. She knew me, however, and her face brightened when I spoke to her.

"Oh yes, m'm, I mind you well. You came to the school one day last year an' took notice o' Magdalen Mary. Most folk do that; but you kissed 'er so kind, an' you'd on a violet gownd. She used to talk o' the 'pretty lady' for a long time arter. Please, m'm, 'ave you seen 'er to-day?"

I told her yes, and that I had just left her very happy with the vicar's wife. Nettie smiled.

"Mrs. Bartram's always good to child'n, an' baby's real fond of 'er, she is. I've been fearin' she'd be dreadful lonesome an' fractious without me. Did you 'ear if she was, please, m'm?" and there was an anxious look in the dull eyes, a restless twitching of the fingers, which rather embarrassed me as to an answer. Smoothing back the scanty hair of her hot face I answered gently:

"She misses you of course, Nettie. It wouldn't be natural if she didn't; but everyone is very kind to her; and you mustn't fret about her now, or you'll make yourself worse, and then you will be longer in getting back to her."

"Yes, m'm, an' maybe they'd go for to be tired o' lookin' arter her, an' she'd get inter mischief. I will try to be quiet, but——" It was not easy, I saw, for even while I was reading to her, she interrupted me twice—once to ask how long I thought it would be before she could get back to her baby, and once, was she quite well, quite well and happy, when I saw her? Poor child! she apologised humbly both times for breaking into the story, but it was plain that her little sister was more interesting to her than any book-children, and when I took her hand at leaving, the

burning fingers clasped round mine in a tight clutch as she asked with feverish eagerness :

"Ma'am, please, you ben't going back from 'ere to the well children, be you?"

"My dear, did you think I should be so thoughtless? I am going for a long walk to gather cowslips; and I shall bring you some to-morrow; but not unless you promise me to go to sleep now, and put every thought out of your head, except getting well as soon as possible."

And then I went away, wondering if there were many children in rich nurseries who loved one another with the intense, unselfish devotion of this little orphan for her sister.

The following day was raw and chilly. The blue sky was blotted out in gray, and broken up into ragged rain-clouds by a cold east wind. Drops hung heavily from the dark red blossoms of the wall-flowers, and the thatch on the eaves; and there was no sunbeam, to pierce the corners of the shawl hung across the high window for the benefit of the sick children's eyes, and brighten the melancholy room. It mattered very little to Nettie. Three of the children were better, and had been removed to the convalescent room upstairs; and no others had filled their places; but she was just in the height of the disease, and lay covered up closely, too fevered and languid even to trouble about her baby, and only murmuring a feeble "Thank you, m'm," as I sat beside her, cooling her hot brow with eau-de-cologne, and fanning her with the bunch of fragrant cowslips I had brought in with me. Suddenly, the quiet was interrupted. Since the measles had broken out in the schools, the children had been allowed more than usual outdoor exercise; and even in the sick-room we could hear, softened by distance, the merry voices and laughter of a lot of them at play in a field on the other side of the road. Of a sudden this stopped, and instead, there rose into the air a long, sharp cry. It was only one at first; but was echoed by a perfect chorus of cries and shrieks coming nearer, and forming themselves into such words as: "She's fallen in!" "Who?" "There she is!" "Oh, someone get her out!" And involuntarily I sprang to the window and looked out. On the other side of the little garden and the road was a marshy field, with a pond in one corner of it, yellow at this season with marsh marigolds. Round this pond half-a-dozen girls were already

gathered, straining at something dark in the centre of it. Other girls were running from the adjoining meadow, where they had been at play; and from a distant shed two labouring men were hurrying to the scene. Even some of the sick children sat up in their beds, and Nettie, who had fallen into a quiet doze, opened her eyes and asked feebly what had happened, that the people were crying.

"It is only a girl who has hurt herself," I said, dropping the curtain and speaking quite quietly. "I am going to help her; but I will be back in a moment; so lie still all of you, or you will catch cold."

And then I drew the blanket closer round Nettie, and hurried out of the room, shutting the door behind me. I had guessed at one glance that that dark object in the pond was a drowning child; and I could not sit still when any helping hand might be of use; but to my dying day I shall never forgive myself for not having called the nurse, who had left the room when I entered it, to resume her charge of the invalids. It was not a hundred yards from the cottage to the pond, but speaking to the children had delayed me; and the men were there first, and were dragging out a dripping, mud-stained figure, which they handed over to me just as I arrived on the scene. Ah, dear me! Well might poor Nettie worry herself about the truant feet and wilful spirit of her charge! It did not need the name repeated in a dozen keys of fear and sorrow by her playfellows; hardly the golden curls still gleaming through the weight of black mud which had soaked through the little brown frock, and dripped off the rounded limbs, to know that it was the plaything of the house, Magdalen Mary, who lay before me.

"She was with us yonder," several of the girls began explaining at once, as I hastened to take what measures I could for restoring the child. "She'd been talkin' o' yeller flowers for Nettie; but we didn't guess what she meant, an' she'd slipped away without none of us noticein', when we heard a screech from 'ere, an' guessed what it was, an' run—Oh! m'm," as the child moved in my arms, "she's comin' to. She ain't dead! Oh! Magdalen Mary, 'ow could yer? What would Nettie ha' said?"

A voice from behind answered—hardly a voice either, but a low, hoarse cry—so weak, and yet so full of anguish, that we all turned round and saw, perhaps, the most unlikely thing it could have entered into

our heads to see. Nettie, whom I had left burning with fever and tucked up in bed—Nettie herself, standing behind us! How she had got out of the infirmary and across the road without being noticed, no one ever knew; only there she was, barefooted, with her fair hair hanging round her poor blotched face and feverish eyes, and nothing but her little cotton nightgown to protect her from the cold! Someone among the chorus of voices, uttering her sister's name, had reached her; and she had come in answer to it, and was standing in a breach in the hedge, clutching at the prickly, leafless boughs for support, not speaking, save for that one bitter cry, but with her eyes turned in a dumb agony of appeal upon us as the baby-girl, roused, by the familiar name, from the half-stupor brought on as much by fright as by her cold douche, lifted up her pretty round face and stretched out her arms to her sister with a passionate cry, "Nettie! Nettie! come to Maglin! Maglin fell in water. Wanted to fin' oo an' take oo de pitty flowers. Let me go, naughty lady! Let me go! Me wants my Nettie! Oh, Nettie, take me; me so cold."

The child was struggling with all its might to escape from my arms. A few battered yellow marigolds, the cause of its accident, had fallen from the little blue fingers, as they tried to beat a way to freedom and Nettie. Some of the girls were crying with gladness because of her safety. Fortunately the matron came up at the same moment with one of the nurses and carried the sick girl back to the infirmary, while I took the little one up to the schools, to be dried and warmed and have her wet clothes removed by a good fire. She had not been in the water more than three minutes after all, so there was really nothing the matter with her beyond a ducking; but not even "sweets," or the loan of another child's coveted doll, could still her sobs for Nettie—Nettie whom she had been trying to reach, and who had appeared for one tantalising moment only to forsake her again—Nettie, who was in a far worse way now than the little sister had any power of imagining. She fairly cried herself to sleep before I left her.

The elder girl died early the next morning. The sudden exposure to a bleak east wind had driven the disease inwards. Inflammation of the lungs set in within a couple of hours, and though all that could be done for her was done, it was

evident, even before the doctor came, that the poor child's hours on earth were numbered. Before leaving he said, whispering, as he turned away from paying his evening visit, "Are you going to remain here? Very kind of you. She won't live through the night, you know. Sinking fast now."

She did, however, and I never left her; nor, through all the long hours and the cruel pain she suffered, did I once hear a word of complaint pass her lips. The nurse had told her that Magdalen Mary was sleeping soundly, and none the worse for her bath, and from that moment there was a bright look on her face which even physical suffering could only cloud, not drive away for good. Later on in the evening, however, when she got so much worse, that she asked and was told she was dying, her eyes filled with tears and the poor little work-worn hands were clenched together on the coverlid as she wailed out:

"Oh! whatever will my baby do? Whatever, ever, will my baby do without me!" but when kneeling beside her I took her hands in mine and whispered to her that Magdalen Mary should be in my care, and find a home with me till she was old enough to go to a good school, such a smile broke over the small face, a moment back all lined and drawn with pain, that it seemed as if the very glory of God were shining in it. She spoke very little during the remainder of the night. Now and then exhaustion, or the pain of breathing, would force a moan from her, but it was always followed by a smile or an attempt to kiss my hand, which she held in her shrunken fingers, as if there were some ingratitude in even feeling her own sufferings after the joy of my promise to her; and towards morning she fell into a quiet sleep which lasted till nearly seven o'clock. The sun was shining brightly when she woke, and lit up the mortal pallor of her face and the yellow cowslips which I had brought her yesterday, and which stood in a coarse blue cup beside the bed. Up in the boughs of a pear-tree a blackbird was singing merrily, and a whole family of fowls clucked and chucked in the yard behind the cottage. Stooping down to her, I saw that there were tears in her eyes, and asked her if there was anything she wanted.

"Only to see my baby onst again. If I could but ha' kissed her onst; an' I can't, I know I can't;" and, with the words, the

tears rolled down her face for the first time uncontrolled.

"My child," I said, very much moved, "if it will comfort you, you shall see her; not in here, lest she should take the infection, but at the window. I will send for one of the girls to bring her, if it will comfort you, Nettie;" and I sent a message to the schools accordingly. Poor Nettie's face was shining.

"Lift me that I may see nearer," she whispered hoarsely, and then lay back against my shoulder gasping for breath, her dim eyes gazing with a pitiful yearning into the blue sky beyond. Outside, the blackbird still filled the air with joyous trills of song; and a long, straggling branch of sweet-briar tapped lightly at the casement in the gentle breeze. Another moment, and the branch was pushed aside by a sturdy pink hand, and a round face rosy with health, and framed in wavy curls, golden as the guilty marigolds which lay on Nettie's pillow, was lifted up to the window instead.

"Me see my Nettie!" shouted the joyous baby voice. "Maglin see Nettie! Nettie, me dood now, twite dood; not go in water nor nuffin no more."

Poor Nettie! I think she tried to speak; but she was too far gone for any words to be audible through the parched white lips. The morning sun, shining in at the casement, threw the shadow of the curly head and little clapping hands athwart Nettie's pillow, and the white-washed wall behind. With a last effort, the poor child turned her face round, and pressed her lips to the shadow of the chubby fingers which were still beating at the window.

The next moment she was gone.

LOADED WAINS.

From the broad fields, their golden glory shorn,
And sunny uplands, of their beauty reft,
Through the still sunlight of the autumn morn,
And hedgerows, with their lingering jewels left,
By the brown river, through the leafy lanes,
On to the farmsteads move the loaded wains.

The stalwart reaper bears his brightened scythe,
Or tracks the course the great machine has made,
And bonnie lass and lad, sunburnt and lithe,
Round whose straw hats woodbine and poppies fade,
Wake all the meadow land with harvest strains,
Clustering and laughing round the loaded wains.

'Tis soft September nature's harvest yields,
But all through life our ripening fruit we reap,
Now storing violets from sweet April fields,
Now roses that bright July sunshines steep,
Now garnering gray October's sober gains,
Now Christmas hollies pile our loaded wains.

Ah me! how fast the fair spring flowers die,
How summer blossoms perish at the touch,
And Hope and Love in useless sympathy,
Weep for the Faith that gave and lost so much!
From half our sheaves drop out the golden grains,
Small is our portion in the loaded wains.

Yet, ere the mighty Reaper takes it all,
Fling out the seed, and tend it rood by rood;
One ear is full, though hundreds round it fall,
One acre 'mid a mildewed upland good;
Eternity will rear on heavenly plains
The smallest treasure won from loaded wains.

ATHLETES AT EASE.

FAMILIAR and venerable, in the athletic traditions and usages of at least one great school, is a division of the "sprightly race" pursuing their studies thereat, according to the element on which their favourite pastime is taken. Those who most delight to "cleave with pliant arm the glassy wave" are comprehended under the title of "wet bobs," those who "urge the flying ball" are known as "dry bobs." The terminology and the distinction are not mentioned by Gray in his famous ode on *A Distant Prospect of Eton College*, but they were probably as old as the days of that classically correct poet. It is a distinction that does duty as the principle of the selection of sides in rowing, or cricket, and foot-ball matches, that has even its social influences and ramifications, and that is the occasion of not a little collective and individual rivalry. When in due time the "wet bob" or "dry bob" ceases to be a schoolboy, and becomes an undergraduate, the distinction acquires greater definiteness, and its social consequences are more clearly felt. The life of the cricketer, who dedicates himself to the sport with a consuming ardour that promotes it to a foremost place in the aims of existence, and the life of the oarsman, are quite apart, involve two thoroughly different sets of experiences at Oxford and Cambridge, and elsewhere. As are the pastimes, so are the habits and manners of those who cultivate them. The "wet bob," like the "dry bob," is conspicuous in his dress, his demeanour, his conversation, his opinions upon things in general. In after years the divergencies between the two may disappear, and it may not be easy to decide who is the votary of the M. C. C., and who hails from the London Rowing Club. But at the university, the boating and the cricketer man are each of them a distinct social species.

The "wet bob" has not a little in his ways which may remind one of the British

sailor. Trained in habits of obedience or command, accustomed to give or to receive orders, couched in anything but conciliatory language, the tone of voice in which the "wet bob" speaks is sharp, his manner brusque, his talk professional. The aquatic undergraduate discourses exclusively of things appertaining to his trim-built wherry, to the prowess of himself, his friends, or enemies. Whether it be in his own rooms, by the bank of his river, on the lawn of the Red Lion at Henley, it is the same. His vocabulary is full of the choicest flowers of the oarsman's argot, and if the conversation strays off to some such striking theme as the beauty of the weather, or the picturesqueness of the scene, he brings it back promptly and peremptorily to the topics of sliding-seats, the catch at the beginning, training and its principles, rival crews and their prospects. Mere superficial polish of bearing is a thing which he is apt to despise. "The hard gray weather," Charles Kingsley has told us, "makes hard Englishmen," and upon this particular order of hard young Englishmen it is not only the hardness of weather which has asserted its influence. It is not alone a régime of strict bodily self-denial to which the youth who is ambitious of aquatic fame must submit. He must have tolerated without wincing, at some time or other, such volleys of vituperative exhortation as only the aquatic "coach" can discharge. When in the days of his novitiate he has been straining every muscle, and each successive tug at the willow has seemed as if it must be the last which exhausted nature can make, he will have been told that he is "doing no work," and will have been assured, with many emphatic embellishments of language, that he has no idea how to manage an oar. Perhaps of late years new amenities have been introduced into the ordeal of aquatic training. But even then the rite is and must be a strict one. Nor, with the exception of the prospect of figuring ultimately as one of eight heroes of popular admiration, and of speeding past the winning-post a bare length ahead of one's rivals amid a tempest of cheers from the banks, is there much that appeals to the imagination, or that can be considered likely pleasantly to excite the enthusiasm of the aspirant oarsman. After he has been drilled into the decent performance of his duties, there are the rigours of the stern, relentless training, unrelieved by little of social pleasure or

delight; there are no late lounging breakfasts, no cosy dinners, no smoking. The captain of the boat is ever near to see that he violates none of the prescribed rules of the truly self-denying ordinance. There are early runs round meadows in the morning, followed by breakfasts substantial rather than enjoyable; wholesome dinners devoured fiercely, and, for the most part, in silence; and the consciousness of a grave physical responsibility from which there is no escape. The régime is one that has, of course, its influence upon the individual character, and the ideal oarsman gradually acquires a severe solemnity of manner, which finds its relief in exhibitions of extravagantly frolicsome fun.

It is true that he has his reward for all this, and there is a very bright side indeed, rich in everything that is socially delectable, to the career of the conscientious and successful aquatic. He is the object of an amount and a quality of hero-worship which is denied even to the triumphant cricketer. His name is on the lips of all the world, and every feature in his face, as well as every characteristic of his "stroke," is intimately known in a thousand households. After all, there is a strong strain of the old Norse pirate in the composition of the modern Englishman, and, for the matter of that, in the modern Englishwoman; and whether it be the yachtsman who circumnavigates the globe, or who is first in a modest race from Gravesend to the Nore, or the member of a victorious crew in an outrigger eight, or the champion sculler over a four-mile course, he attracts the instinctive admiration of the immediate bystanders and of society in general. There is another compensation for the severe rigours of aquatic training of which our oarsman can boast. In these glorious summer months, when the scenery of the banks of the Thames can compare with that of any river in the world; when the waters of the Thames, almost from its mouth to its source—certainly from London-bridge to Richmond, and again from Richmond to Henley—are alive with pleasure-craft of every size; when young men and maidens in the neighbourhood of the great city seem to rush to the river as naturally as young ducks do to the farm-yard pond, the "wet bob," who has given his attention to his calling, and who has attained a fair amount of eminence in his art, is in enormous request. Now is the

time for him to feel and to enjoy his superiority over the mere "dry bob." His is the precedence in all water excursions, and his the escort, of which the fair wearers of the prettiest and nattiest river-costumes imaginable, avail themselves with alacrity, and not without some pride—for why should not the feminine breast experience the same thrill of satisfaction with a place in a deftly-managed boat, as with a place on the box-seat of the well-horsed, consummately-driven drag?

Nevertheless, the purely social attractions of the cricketer's life considerably surpass those of the hero of the river. There is an ease and freedom in the kind of existence which the wielders of the willow possess, that have quite an incomparable charm. He must, to a certain extent, "train," no doubt. He must eschew hours inordinately late, and a diet injudiciously generous. But there is none of the severity—one might even say the asceticism—of daily routine which the oarsman has to practise. A boat-race, again, may be compared to a flash, a cricket-match to a steady illumination. The rival craft speed past with a lightning pace and they are gone; the cricketer, if he have his fair share of human vanity, may reflect that for minutes—nay, it may be hours together—he fills a certain place in the public eye. And then what a cheery round of physical exertion and social pleasure it is! The well-played innings; the plaudits that greet the batsman when he retires to the pavilion, having puzzled by turn all the bowlers in the enemy's camp, but yielding at last to the fortune of war; the congratulations of his comrades; the pleasant chat with his friends among the bystanders; the fielding out; the brilliant catch; the well-stopped ball; finally, the welcome announcement that the last wicket of the other side is down; the summons to lunch; the smoke afterwards, and in due time the resumption of the station at the wicket—each one of these incidents has about it a kind of inspiration which, as Horace puts it in his panegyric on the athletes of old, raises the "lords of the land to the level of the gods."

But we have to do with the cricketer, not when he is on, but when he is off duty. It is, therefore, not necessary to dwell on the genius of the game, nor to point out particularly what is perhaps one of its chief charms—the encouragement for in-

dividuality of action, and diversity of excellence as compared with boating. Something, of course, there is to be said on the other side. Regarded as an amusement for ingenuous youth, whether at school or college, the cricket-field involves greater expenditure of time and money than the river. Boating is the relaxation of one who might very well be the most assiduous of literary students, and destined to win the highest academic laurels from his alma mater. Further, to take the case of the undergraduate at either university, while five or six pounds a year will defray the necessary expenses of the "wet bob," thrice that sum will be barely sufficient for the cricketer. There are the fees of professionals for practice of the afternoon on the Cowley or at Fenner's Ground. There are all the necessary extravagances of the summer term. The undergraduate who devotes himself to cricket will find that after twelve o'clock he has no further time for study. There is the drag waiting at the college gate to take him up to the scene of action; it will be seven o'clock when the stumps are drawn, and then the teams will return to dine—but not in the college hall.

But let us take, as is just to do, a far wider view of what is deservedly called our national game. The cricket-field, infinitely more than the hunting-field, is entitled to rank as a true national civiliser. It is almost a commonplace to say that it provides those opportunities for general intercourse on a footing of equality, in country districts and in urban neighbourhoods as well, which hunting can only afford to a comparatively limited number. It really places a thousand joys of life within the reach of those who, without the solace of their prowess with the bat and ball, would find existence a very humdrum and monotonous affair. It acts as the social cement of classes, and it is a legitimate outlet for whatever democratic aspirations there may be in the English breast. Whether he be an impecunious subaltern in a regiment quartered in a garrison town, or whether he be the son of some local professional man, the cricketer—some degree of proficiency must of course be postulated—carries with him his own credentials. His skill in the game gradually superinduces a recognition of excellence of character, which would certainly otherwise have been ignored. He makes friends, and he has the entrée of agreeable and eligible houses. It is no exaggeration to say

—and the statement, which is here not rashly made, may be weighed with satisfaction by the parents and guardians of young athletes who have loved cricket perhaps not wisely but too well—that more valuable acquaintances, more permanent and fruitful friendships, have been made in the cricket-field than in any other social rendezvous of the United Kingdom. The cricketer's life is certainly the most purely enjoyable which any young man could lead. Is there any week in England, or in the world, like the Canterbury week? It is of course overcrowded with amusements of every kind—balls, dinners, private theatricals, and what not. Yet each of these entertainments belongs to the list of the social accessories of the cricketer's career. Excellent treatises, almost innumerable, have been written on the subject of cricket. But the Izaak Walton of the pastime has still to appear. The immortal Izaak, indeed, was the apostle and panegyrist of angling, not merely regarded from the point of view of sport, but as the chosen opportunity of pious calm, and, if needful, total seclusion. Seclusion, indeed, is incompatible with modern cricket. But the genius of the age is not the same now as it was three centuries and a half ago. If the niche which the friend and colleague of Cotton left vacant, the theme which he should select is that of the cricketer and his life. In the year 1559 isolation from the rest of one's kind did not mar the idea of pure enjoyment; now such isolation is impossible; what is called society is a mob, or rather an aggregate of mobs: what charmed a Walton would not charm his descendants. Therefore, one is warranted in saying that, always supposing him amenable to the spirit of the age, the author of the *Complete Angler*, if he had lived now, would have chosen the boat rather than the bat as his companion.

But the purely social advantages of athleticism are very far from being confined either to the river or the cricket-field. What is to be said of the whole race of bicyclists, pedestrians, runners of races, jumpers of hurdles, of high and broad leaps? It is comparatively little, as it is absolutely nothing to our present purpose, that each of these recreations tends to promote and preserve a sound mind in a sound body. They must necessarily transform all the ideas of social enjoyment, which were once current among the classes from whom their votaries are chiefly chosen. A

courageous and a muscular race our young men have always been. The adoption of the institutions now named has made them a race, which seeks its pleasures in the paths, which regard to the traditions of English manhood and the precepts of hygienic science indicate. Further, these are each of them recreations which have secured, long ere this, a public as appreciative and admiring as has fallen to the lot of our "wet bobs" or "dry bobs." Yet the chief advantage of all still remains to be mentioned. Bicycles and athletic sports, like rifle volunteering, have neutralised the temptations which, before they were established and recognised amongst us, existed for a very pernicious variety of idleness—that which can be described by no better word than loafing. Athleticism may not have crowned all its votaries with the laurels of social heroism, but it has disseminated a thoroughly healthy and energising taste amongst our young men. It has taken them away from the smoking-room and the billiard-room at unreasonable hours; it has done more than any other invention of this century has done towards stamping out that physical and moral malady which, in the pages of this journal, was once powerfully described by the author of *David Copperfield* as "dry rot in men."

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER I. THE SIX POINTS.

MR. GRISDALE had been compelled to effect another change in the title of his newspaper: it was now called *The Volcano*; and, certainly, its utterances were of an explosive and detonating character. Otherwise the little organ was harmless, and even somewhat weakly of aspect. However, it fairly expressed the views of certain classes, and was recognised as their literary representative.

Political questions speedily grow cold and old, and fossilise. It is hard to believe that the dry bones ever lived, that the extinct ashes were ever quick with flame. Time is a great disenchanter; the present satirises and mocks the past. How toneless sound the old war-cries! Had they ever musical force and meaning

enough to thrill men's pulses, and set their hearts beating turbulently? Could the world ever have troubled itself to differ and divide about this? was there really serious bandying of words or interchange of blows touching such triviality as that? How small seem the great topics when we look back at them, even from a very little distance!

Yet, be it understood, the times in which The Volcano gave forth its words of fiery menace to its foes, of rallying and encouragement to its friends, were grave enough in all conscience. Intense discontent prevailed; sorrow and suffering, crime and poverty, were on every side. Society was split and splintered into classes and factions; human sympathies seemed paralysed; between rich and poor a great gulf was fixed; violent collision between the people and its rulers appeared more and more imminent.

If things were bad in England they were ten times worse in Ireland. There had been grievous famine and pestilence. Horrifying stories of want and suffering had filled the newspapers. Thousands upon thousands had been down-stricken by disease. Hunger, nakedness, sickness, and misery most desperate had ravaged the land. The workhouses and fever hospitals had been overcrowded with the dead and dying. "Death from the effects of starvation and destitution, caused by a want of the common necessities of life," was the dreadful, monotonous verdict, day after day pronounced so long as it had been possible to hold inquests. But the coroners complained, and with reason, of overwork; mortality was too swift and too busy for them. Nor could the undertakers keep pace with the famine. They could not make coffins fast enough. Indeed, time would scarcely permit of the corpses being borne to the churchyards. There were instances of the dead being interred hastily where they fell, or in the nearest field. The people, maddened by starvation, flew to arms. With their last pence they bought gunpowder instead of bread. They entered upon a mad warfare with the authorities. Famine riots ensued—wild conflicts with the soldiery and police. The bread shops were broken into and pillaged; the meal and provision stores were sacked and destroyed; whole towns were despoiled as by an invading force. A great army of starving peasants laid waste the country, stripping the towns of their stock, the fields of their grain, and

lying in wait even to wreck the ships in the seaports, to plunder the cargoes of corn and Indian flour, or to rob the cattle on board of their half-eaten turnips. Crime and outrage occurred in every quarter, and with the cries of the starving mingled the complaints and revilings of the politically disaffected, of those who, in addition to their individual grievances, believed that they had also the wrongs of their country to avenge.

I speak of things as I found them; as they seemed to me. But I do not claim for myself any specially enlightened view of the situation. Indeed, I can see now that I was very prejudiced, that I was without originality of judgment, that my sentiments took their form and colour from the opinions of those about me. In truth, there were many, very many, who thought with even more despondency and apprehension than I did of the political position.

We charged the Government with bringing about the troubles of the people. We insisted upon parliamentary action in the matter. We demanded most radical and comprehensive reforms. The more zealous amongst us advocated revolution. For my part, I was a democrat, a Chartist. I believed, with the party I had joined, that The People's Charter, as it was called, comprised the real remedy for the maladies and misfortunes under which the country laboured.

But if this Charter were refused us, must we wrest it violently from our rulers? That question divided us. It was very hard to answer it. There were "physical-force Chartists," and "moral-force Chartists." But it was soon made clear to us that, in our case, "moral force" was an inefficient and almost powerless instrument. It would not pick the lock of the iron-bound doors Parliament had slammed in our faces. There appeared real necessity for action of a decisive kind—for deeds taking the place of words. The system of agitation we had entered upon led us, by what seemed a natural process, to aggression and revolt.

Let us not be too harshly judged. We were but bettering the instruction we had received. We were simply executing the villainy we had been taught. We had learnt from the very men who now formed the Government of the time, to look to political change as the remedy for social wrongs and miseries, and to force on such change as best we could by angry menaces,

and, if need were, by riot and rebellion. Our rulers had risen to power by inflaming the passions of the people. The legislation of 1832 was in a great degree the result of insurrection; the law had been defied and outraged, towns had been fired, a furious mob had threatened to march upon London. Sedition had then seemed to be a reasonable, an excusable, almost a lawful thing. And it had succeeded. Why should we not try sedition again?

The working classes, the poorer classes, the lower classes, describe us as you will—for I counted myself of them—felt grievously insulted, cajoled, injured. Year by year our state appeared to grow more and more hopeless, our wrongs deeper and deeper. By our sacrifices and struggles we had obtained power for others, not for ourselves; indeed we had but increased the number of our oppressors, endowed them with enlarged capacity for oppression. It was very necessary that a new effort should be made, and that there should be no mistake about it this time.

Were we turning from one quack medicine to another? The Reform Bill having failed us, was our new panacea, with its famous Six Points, so marvellously sure to cure our maladies, to restore us to social and political health? Thousands upon thousands of Englishmen so believed. At least our adored Charter would admit us to a share in the government of the nation. "The possession of one ten-thousandth part of a talker in the national palaver," so a cynic described the poor privilege we craved so anxiously, we strove for so desperately.

No doubt the Charter was foolishly, extravagantly, ignorantly regarded by too many of us. It was as a word of magic, a spell of exceeding potency. We contemplated it until our tired, dazed eyes endowed it with gigantic size and strength, purpose and significance. It was to us an object of devotion and worship as the Caaba of Mecca to the Moslems. We credited it with talismanic virtues, with almost divine influences and attributes. It was to abolish injustice for ever; it was to establish right everywhere; it was to regenerate the world. The Charter ours, and there would be an end throughout all time of sickness and want, of trouble and discontent, of war and crime, of hatred, malice, and of all uncharitableness. It was a dream; nevertheless to us it was a very real thing for a season.

I must own that I am not setting forth precisely my own opinion upon the subject, and that I was held by many to be but a half-hearted adherent of the cause. In truth I could not rise to the fever-heat of my friends' enthusiasm. At the same time I do not wish to disconnect myself from the men with whom I was acting. I would be viewed as one of them. I will not pretend that my judgment was superior to theirs. But there were grains of misgiving mixed with my faith in the Charter. And if I never doubted the honesty of intention of those supporting it, their wisdom and prudence seemed to me oftentimes gravely open to question.

A halo of vagueness encircled the Charter; in like manner a haze obscured the plans of its advocates. They spoke plainly of wringing it from the Government by violence, if no other way were left open to them—were constant in their threats of recourse to "ulterior measures." Brave words enough and to spare were uttered; upon certain of our rulers torrents of invective were poured; they were now held up to withering contempt, and now denounced as objects of furious detestation. I do not, of course, defend the taste or the sense of much that was said. Fervid oratory is apt at all times to effervesce, and overflow into mere froth and foolishness. No doubt the broadest license of rhetoric was often exceeded by our speakers—men of little learning or refinement—addressing themselves to a rude and vulgar, and even somewhat barbarous audience. But it was hard to believe that they really meant all they said; that, in hurling defiance at the Government, in counselling the people to take arms against their oppressors, in bidding the world observe the grand spectacle of the triumph of liberty and justice over tyranny and inhumanity, they were actually prepared for civil war, and proposed forthwith to do battle with disciplined troops, to face bayonets and grape-shot in the public streets.

"You must form your own opinion, my dear boy," said Lucius Grisdale, in reply to questioning of mine upon the subject. "You are quite as competent to judge as I am. Only bear in mind that it is as well sometimes to say rather more than you mean—some people can only be reached and impressed by exaggeration—and to ask for a good deal more than you expect to get. For, as a rule, you know, we don't get more than we ask for, but less;

so it doesn't do to ask for too little. As to being serious about this matter, I can only answer for myself and *The Volcano*. We are very serious; don't let there be any question about that. We must have the Charter by fair means or by foul. As for fighting, why should we hold back from fighting for a good cause?"

"You think there will be fighting?"

"It is possible. Tyranny usually strikes a blow before it falls, or before it runs away. It was so, you remember, in 1830. That did not prevent the soldiers of Charles the Tenth from fraternising with the people. They embraced with effusion; they shed tears of mutual joy, congratulating each other on having so happily accomplished the deliverance of their country. It was not really delivered, as it happened; but they honestly believed it was—that was enough for them."

"The victories of 1830—if they are to be called victories—were not bought without bloodshed."

"That is true. All victories have their victims. The front rank falls to form a rampart of corpses, over which the rear presses to the triumph of the good cause. Who will form the front rank? Well, I will for one. I can set a good example. If I may not fight like a soldier—for, alas! I'm very small and feeble, and I grow old fast—still I can die like a soldier, with my face to the foe. I can show the rest that death is not so hard a thing when one dies for the right."

It was impossible to doubt the little man's courage or his integrity. He continued:

"You think that the sight of death would terrify rather than encourage? It might, at first; but bloodshed infuriates, maddens. Our people are not used to fighting—are not trained to arms. Well, the undisciplined French mob beat back the skilled hirelings of tyranny; and will again when the right time arrives. It is vain to say that the populace cannot conquer an army. Why, they've done it! I grant you there might be some shrinking back at the first roar of the cannon—the first sight of death in their ranks. There might be panic and flight, very likely; for bloodshed is an awful thing; and, when volleys are being fired, there's no knowing who may be hit—possibly one's precious self. But those who fled would return; their cause, being a good cause, would give them heart, and strength, and courage; they would return again and

again. Even suppose them unarmed, their numbers would be so vast, they would simply walk down their foes—who would be as atoms in the presence of an avalanche passing over and crushing them. It would be the army of the people overwhelming the miserable janissaries of despotism. Is the result for a moment doubtful?"

"You are speaking of English soldiers," I reminded him.

"That's true. They are English soldiers, and, to my thinking, that is a good reason for believing that they would not point their guns at the English people; that they would not side with the oppressors against the oppressed. But we shall see, it may be, one of these fine mornings. Meanwhile, let them not despise us overmuch, as an unarmed mob. When the liberties of a nation are at stake, the first thing that comes to hand may prove a formidable weapon of offence, let it be either the spits from the kitchen, the hammer from the forge, or the poker, tongs, and shovel from the fireside, or the railings from our squares, and parks, and areas. Why, sir, the women would wield their mopsticks, the children would fling stones on behalf of the good cause. You look serious, Basil."

"I think we are speaking of a very serious matter, Mr. Grisdale."

"Everything in life is serious, more or less. But don't let us make things out to be more serious than they really are. As the editor of *The Volcano* I am bound to use strong language; my public expect it of me; they would not buy my paper if they did not find strong language in it. I don't mince matters; I never have minced matters, and I am not going to mince matters now. I am staunch, Basil. So far as I am concerned, I stand by every word I've written in *The Volcano*. If we can't get what we want, and what we ought to have, except by fighting for it, then I say let us fight for it. I'll fight with the rest, and in the front rank, as I stated just now. But the immediate question is not one of fighting. What we have to do just now is, to show the foe that we are in earnest. He must be frightened, or he'll yield us nothing. Well, to frighten him, we must bounce a little, and spout our loudest, and attitudinise a good deal. In plain words, we must kick up a row—in genteeler terms, we must enlighten society by means of a grand demonstration! That's what we are going to do. We keep physical force and ulterior measures in

the background for a little; they are not to be called into action, until the right moment has arrived, and everything else has failed. I don't say that they won't be frequently mentioned in *The Volcano*—because they will. It will be my task to tell my readers to prepare for the worst. Meanwhile, we respect the law—we proceed constitutionally. Our grievances are once more to be brought before Parliament; a deputation is about to attend upon the Hon. Pierce Plumer, who has undertaken to be our spokesman in the House of Commons."

I gathered from Mr. Grisdale's manner that he was not wholly in favour of this proceeding, but accepted it in deference to the opinion of others.

"It's hard they won't allow us to speak for ourselves," he said. "If they'd only let me address them for half an hour from the bar of the House of Commons, I'd astonish them; I'd show them what popular oratory is really like. I almost think I could die happy, having accomplished that. But there's no help for it. We must be content with Mr. Plumer's advocacy. It's hard, I say again. He's the son of a lord; he oils his hair, and wears a curl on his forehead, and a tuft on his chin. I don't say he isn't clever; to tell the truth, he speaks uncommonly well. But he wears lemon kid gloves. I hate the whole lemon-kidded faction. I can't bear to think of the noble army of the horny-handed sons of toil being led by a son of a lord, an exquisite in lemon-coloured kid gloves."

"But he may be sincere in spite of his gloves!"

"He can't be. We are no more to him than his haberdashery, nor so much. He patronises politics and the Charter as he patronises the turf, the drama, and the fine arts. He is one of the frivolous classes. The world is his playground; life is sport to him. He is the son of Lord Eldridge, Hereditary Grand Popinjay and Clerk of the Feathers to the Crown. What can such a man care about us? How can he be in earnest about anything? He's a good-natured fop, who's made very free with his money, and now hasn't got much of it left. He's very popular; he sits as member for Stratford-at-Bow, and he's looked upon as a sort of tribune of the people. But there's no more to be said. We must accept help for him, and be

thankful. Let it be owned that he doesn't want courage; he has even fought and bled for his country, as a subaltern in a very fashionable and expensive regiment, and he is almost the only man in the House of Commons who dares to express sympathy with our cause. Still, I can't, and I don't respect him very much; for how can we be sure of his good faith? However, you shall judge for yourself, Basil. Join the deputation that is going to wait on the Honourable Pierce Plumer, and trust him, if you can. For my part, I don't like your aristocratic democrats. I've known too many tribunes of the people, and cruelly they've betrayed us. You know what was written of one of them:

"We dreamt that to nobles he ne'er would bow,
Nor the people's cause disgrace,
Till he crouched for a coronet rather low
And wriggled at last to a place;
And then, when we fancied fight he must
'Gainst the wrongs he used to blame,
We found to our very great disgust,
That his views were not the same!"

"But no cause is secure against treachery. There are traitors in every camp. As I've said before—if you were to turn over the files of my newspapers, I think you would find it many times mentioned—there is always a Judas in every combination of men. He is not an individual; he is a tribe. There are men amongst us, loud and fervent in their profession, who would sell the very Charter itself—at sixpence a point—just like a game of whist!"

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I. THE FIVE ADZES.

GREAT Job, the god of thunder,
And March, the god of war,
And Neptune with his tried 'un,
Apollyon with his cur—
And all the gods terresteral
Ascended on their spears,
To view with ad-mi-ra-ti-on
The British Grennydiers.

The singer took advantage of the chorons to bury his face modestly in his pewter tankard, and then went on again to the same tune :

Some talk o' Harry Saunders,
And some o' merry glees ;
Of coal, and Alice Andrews,
And all such folks as these.
But it is my opinion,
There's none for to compear,
With that brave and ancient Nero,
The British Grennydier.

And once more the singer made up during the chorons for the enforced abstinence of his solo.

It was a furiously wet night without. The rain was coming down in a torrent, nay, in a deluge, and a battery of hail rattled on the windows. Altogether, it was a fine atmosphere of contrast, for those who had the good fortune to sit round the long deal table within. They were not of the sort that want cushions and backs to their chairs. Long, bare, wooden forms did as well for them as for their grandfathers—for their great-grandfathers for that matter. For the Five Adzes had been known in the parish of Laxton—Lass'n, as the natives called it—from time whereof the memory of man runneth not

to the contrary. The oldest inhabitant had sat on a deal form in the parlour of the Five Adzes, and had never dreamed of a time when not even one adze had been hung out for a sign.

I am half ashamed to admit that the floor was sanded. Nobody likes to admit that his reader has guessed rightly ; but truth is truth, and must be told. Not only so, but the room had a chimney-corner—and altogether the room was the most conventional bar-parlour that even that creature of conventions, the teller of stories, ever imagined, or reproduced at second-hand. It therefore needs no description. Two and two make four, and the parlour of the Five Adzes was the parlour of the Five Adzes, and there is an end. But the evening was not at an end, though it was near upon nine o'clock—a terribly late hour for Lass'n.

Nor, apparently was the song.

Whene'er we are romanded
To storm the parish shades,
Our leaders march with fuchsias,
And we with—

Suddenly, the singer stopped—not this time to bury his face in his tankard, but to stare at the door.

"Pray don't let me disturb yon, gentlemen," said a pleasant voice. "It's a fine song, and well sung, and I want to hear the end."

Nor was the appearance of the new guest in the least calculated to interrupt harmony. He was a bright-looking young man of six or seven and twenty, with a fair brown beard and moustache, trimmed artistically short, all gleaming, glistening, and dripping with rain, like a Triton's fresh from the sea. He shook himself like a dog just out of a pond, threw his knapsack

on the end of one form and his cap on the end of another, walked straight to the chimney-corner and looked round him encouragingly, as if he were perfectly at home.

He was a few years older than when we met him at Lindenheim, but there was no mistaking the clear open forehead and the laugh left in the eyes, though hidden in the new-worn beard, and the free air with which he at once accepted the situation and made himself at home. And one instinctively felt that, had he fallen on his legs in the midst of a cabinet council, instead of in the parlour of the Five Adzes, he would have been no less completely at his ease.

They were quick eyes with which he glanced round, and will serve to see with excellently. At the head of the long table sat the singer; a strapping fellow, tall and broad-shouldered, with velveteen jacket and gaiters—perhaps a gamekeeper. People carry their callings upon them, to eyes like Walter Gordon's. By his side sat one who was, perhaps, the parish clerk, more probably the parish clerk's deputy—most certainly, a shoemaker. And so on round the table, the most noteworthy persons of Lass'n, who were above the rank of labourer, sat, and smoked long church-wardens, and buried their noses from time to time in tankards of ale. They neither laughed nor smiled, with the exception of one man, whose smile was indelible.

"He is the sexton," thought Walter Gordon.

The people of Lass'n were not more given to inhospitality than their neighbours, but when men meet together, night after night, to drink ale out of the same old tankards, and to listen to the same song, without seeing a stranger from year's end to year's end, an intruder is safe to be an element of discord. The song had grown accustomed to certain pairs of ears, and felt shy when called on to make the old, familiar impression on a new pair, however ready and willing. The British Grenadiers, for once in their history, lost courage. In fact, all but Walter Gordon were habitués of the Five Adzes; and yet Walter Gordon alone seemed to be at home. It is true he had his back to the chimney-corner; and that gives a man an advantage everywhere.

"You look a bit dampish, master," said the deputy parish clerk after long deliberation, and critically.

"Well, that's no reason I should act like

a wet blanket. Come—if you don't let me hear the end of that song, I shall go out into the rain again."

The deputy parish clerk appeared to nudge the gamekeeper. But the gamekeeper abstractedly took a draught from his pewter and watched the cloud from his pipe like a metaphysician in a dream.

Still the rain came down with a steady sweep and rush, and the hailstones rattled against the panes. The great kitchen clock ticked as if keeping time to the music of the rain, and Walter Gordon, having filled and lighted his own pipe, stood waiting for the inevitable eggs and bacon, and surveyed the silent parliament of Laxton. A long day's tramp over a heavy country, the clouded atmosphere of a tavern parlour, the portentous silence of his chance companions, the persistent rush of rain, and the monotonous ticking combined to bring on that feeling of satisfied fatigue, which is one of the grand pleasures of those who know the feeling of a knapsack on their shoulders. Not being in love, and knowing nothing of the shyness that most men feel in the company of those whom, as their inferiors, they feel obliged to treat with condescending bonhomie, he let his thoughts travel about with the smoke of his pipe, and looked and listened at dreamy ease.

In truth, he was a man to be envied, irrespectively of the pleasures of a good appetite with the supper of a country inn before it, a temper that liked wet weather, a long tramp, and perfect peace of mind. If we know little of him, it is not because what we do not know is any secret—nothing was ever a secret about Walter Gordon since he was born. I am well-nigh as ashamed about his want of mystery as of the commonplace, conventional picturesqueness of The Five Adzes.

He was a rolling-stone and he gathered no moss; but that matters nothing when it is covered with moss before it begins to roll. Gordon's Mill, since the first Gordon came over the Border with half-a-crown in his stocking-foot, had flourished and prospered, and it prospered and flourished still. In fact, Walter Gordon had been born in the very purple of trade. He might roll a long way, even downhill, without having any of the moss rubbed from him. His father did not toil that he might spend. Hundreds of hands toiled that he might roll easily. Is it strange that he should have been found in Bohemian Lindenheim? Not a whit stranger

than that he should be standing with a wet jacket in the bar-parlour of The Five Adzes. No stranger than if he had been met in a Red Indian wigwam or an African diamond-field. Given a young Englishman with full lungs and full pocket—where is it strange to find him? He is no Alphonse, to be looked for on the Boulevard, and, if not there, in the Morgue.

He belonged to the third generation of commerce; that is to say, he was neither the self-made man nor the parvenu—he was of the generation that had a grandfather. And, young as he was, he had seen many sides of life, had enjoyed them all, and looked forward to enjoying many more, before settling down to whatever career might suit him best after a thorough taste of the cream of each and the bitter of none. He had known Horchester and Oxford. He had played at studying law in London, medicine in Paris, philosophy in Jena, music in Lindenheim. And now he had found out that his true vocation was to be a painter. Why not? Why should not a man, who can pay for the luxury, grasp as much life as he can in his time—why should he narrow himself in one groove, for the sake of imitating those who have the misfortune to be born poor? Surely it is good to be one thing if one must, but all things if one can.

He was an only son. Only sons are proverbially—if there were such a proverb—born to vex the souls of their fathers and break the hearts of their mothers; unless indeed they turn out milksops, and are smothered out of manhood by petting. Whatever truth there may be in that non-existent proverb, Walter Gordon was saved from being an awful example thus far by—being spoiled. Everybody had combined to spoil him; and the universal sunshine, that had been his lot in the world, had made him the finest fair-weather sailor that ever was known. And, as fair weather was his destiny, to have made him anything else would be to have made him ill. What need is there of wasting the qualities of an Arctic explorer on the captain of a pleasure-boat? Give him pleasant ways, and his career is fulfilled.

To a man of his temper, thorough-going bodily discomfort is a positive joy. It gives a piquant flavour to a life of ease. To stand in smoking clothes, hungry and thirsty, in the ungenial parlour of The Five

Adzes, with no comrade but a pipe, was as welcome to Walter Gordon as to stand in his everyday shoes would have been to a real landscape-painter with his bread to earn—for a change. Poor of nature must he be to whom vagrant freedom is not one of the grandest of luxuries; the doubtful fare, the chance lodging, the power to stay or go on as caprice may order, the openness to adventure, the scorn of weather, the day without duties, and the night without dreams. What do steam-travellers know of the delightful temptation to stray out of the high road, in order not to lose the chance of being lost on a moor? Steam is good after all—it leaves the by-paths and the corners sacred to those who love them. There was a railway line within three miles of Laxton, but it left Laxton more out of the world than when the coach used to pass through it, when the oldest inhabitant was a school-boy.

And now, there is no need to follow the thoughts of Walter Gordon, for the very sufficient reason that he had no thoughts to follow. He had tramped a good five-and-thirty miles that day, and was half asleep on his legs as he stood with his back to the chimney, waiting for eggs and bacon, and lazily listening to the rush of the rain.

Such conditions of mind and body can have but one end. In fifteen minutes from his interruption of the song that formed the sole recreation of Laxton, he was asleep in the chimney-corner, with his legs stretched out along the settle and his knapsack for a pillow. He had retired from the world, and did not even enter that of dreams.

But dreams will come.

How long he slept he knew not. But surely, when he thought he woke, he was dreaming still.

It is The Five Adzes, remember—in the most conventional of country villages the most conventional village inn. The rain still came down; the hailstones still beat against the window-panes. The long deal table still stretched along the sanded floor. Even as when he entered there was singing. But it was not The British Grenadiers, or any Laxton version of that famous march, and the singer was not the gamekeeper. In short, he could not believe his ears—or his eyes.

He had been in Italy—perhaps that was mixing with his dreams.

At any rate, what he saw was as inconsistent with an English village inn as The British Grenadiers would have been with a village tavern in Calabria.

The room was filled with an atmosphere of awe-struck wonder. In the gamekeeper's chair sat the gamekeeper—transformed indeed. He had become a woman—and a woman who was less to be looked for in The Five Adzes of Laxton, than in any conceivable spot in the whole of the rest of the world.

Walter Gordon was used to wayside adventures, and was not given to dreaming when he tumbled across them. But he rubbed his eyes now. She was no roadside ballad-singer who might, on a wet night, have managed to tumble into the respectable society of the parish clerk, the sexton, and the under-gamekeeper. She was a full-made, handsome woman, of the most uncertain of all ages which may be called Midsummer, when Spring is forgotten, while Autumn as yet has made no sign. Though it was a warm summer rain that was falling, she was dressed in a travelling dress of furs, that even a man's eye could tell at a glance must have brought a small fortune to the tradesman who had had the making of it, and there was an air about it of having been paid for in francs rather than in pounds. Her complexion was of a marvellously brilliant fairness—so brilliant indeed as to surpass the ordinary work of nature, and to be out of harmony with a pair of large brown eyes framed by long black lashes and eyebrows of the opposite colour to her hair, which was of the brightest golden brown. There was a want of youth—of nothing else—in the outline of her face, but no sign as yet that youth had gone; and her beautiful brown eyes shone with light, almost with laughter, in the flicker of the tallow candles on the long deal board. Walter's eyes went instinctively to her hands—he always looked to a woman's hands next to her eyes. He did not see her hands, but he saw a pair of the most exquisite gloves that ever visited a connoisseur in his wildest dreams, though they were not of the smallest size. Her features—to which he turned after her gloves—were nearly as regular as a sculptor could ask for in his model, save that there was a symptom of over-depression about the region of the nostrils, and that there was one shade too much decision about the curve of the chin.

She was not an Englishwoman; and there-

fore her precise station, socially speaking, was hard to read. She might be a vagrant princess, or she might be otherwise; but to take her for an Englishwoman was out of the question. No Englishwoman would have worn furs in July, or have been so brown or so fair at once, or have had that easy carriage of the shoulders, that even her travelling-dress could not conceal. And, above all, no Englishwoman could have sung to the most select of audiences in the voice, and with the style, wherein she was astounding the parliament of Laxton.

I hold the true Englishwoman's voice to be the sweetest on earth, whether she speaks or whether she sings. But, for its very sweetness, it lacks intensity and power. It wants the great dramatic tone, which distinguishes a flood from a river. The village gamekeeper, the village sexton, the parish clerk, were being bewildered, with open eyes, open ears, open mouths, by all the bravura of the richest and fullest soprano ever heard off the stage—never, it may be sworn, in the sanded parlour of a village inn.

Walter Gordon closed his eyes again, and dreamed he was at the opera. And surely—surely he had heard that voice before? Had he not heard that very song elsewhere?

He listened to the end with closed eyes, invisible in his chimney-corner. Then followed a laugh, almost—but not quite—as musical as the song.

"Bravissima!" he exclaimed. But she took no notice, even if she heard. And that told tales. A singer who was not extremely used to "Bravissima" would not have failed to notice a word, as little to be expected in The Five Adzes as her own self and her own song.

He waited to see what would happen next—for surely this was no everyday adventure, and was not to be spoiled before its time. And he thought: "Surely I have heard that very voice, but where? There are no two voices like that in the world."

Again he regarded her, more intently this time, through his half-closed eyes. She was handsome, beyond question. But—well, there was no disguising the matter; there was a want of nature as well as of youth even about her smile. It was as bright as diamonds; but not as sweet as roses. It suggested the stage, even there, where the audience was listening with its mouths and eyes rather than with its ears. And there was a touch of easy, contemptuous humour about it too, which robbed

it of half its charm, as if she were singing to these bores to mock rather than to please. But there was nothing but polished sweetness in her voice as she said, with a slow, clear, southern accent:

"Now, my friends, I will hear you. It is your turn."

She did not, like the gamekeeper, bury her face in pewter. But she took up an immense black fan, and used it to keep the smoke of shag away from her throat and nostrils, smiling serenely and benignly the while.

Walter Gordon had by this time convinced himself that he was really awake, and was not confusing dreams of the opera with the realities of *The Five Adzes*. Shyness was never his foible, and a sudden impulse seized him. He retreated into the farthest corner of the chimney, and began the Serenade from *Don Juan*.

The fan stopped. The lady, princess, prima-donna, whoever she was, looked at the gamekeeper. It was not he. Then at the sexton, then at the clerk, then all round the table—in vain. Then she struck the table with her fan, and called:

"Prosper!"

If there was any doubt about her being a foreigner, there was none about his being one who came in from the passage. Frenchman was written all over him, from the curl of his hat-brim to the tips of his fingers. And if she only suggested the foot-lights, he advertised them.

"Prosper, go to the chimney," she said, still in English, "and find for me the gentleman that sings so bad—so very bad indeed. And ask him to leave off, if you please."

Her speech was rude and not witty; but it made the Laxton people grin. She, with all her outlandish look, had somehow found a shorter road to their unsympathetic sympathies than Walter Gordon. "She is one of them," he thought to himself; but, though he was a musician and an amateur, he was not offended, not even though he had intended to turn the tables of surprise, and had failed.

But he was not going to wait for Monsieur Prosper to fetch him. He came out from his corner and bowed. The lady put the edge of the fan to her lips and looked at him over it with the gravest of airs. He waited for her to speak, hat in hand.

He did not think himself embarrassed. He believed himself, by his silence and exaggeration of deference, to be throwing the weight of the situation upon her. But,

as she probably thought the same, they stood and sat thus till the steady look of her large eyes, into which she had called the most intense gravity, called up a tinge of colour into his face; he felt it, and everybody knows how a blush grows. There was no boldness about her look, only the perfection of calmness and ease.

Gradually, as she watched the colour mount in him, a smile woke up in her eyes, then a laugh, and then she rattled her fan together. He, also, could not help a smile; partly in sympathy with hers, partly at his own new sensation of having wanted ease.

"It was you, then, monsieur, who said, 'Bravissima?'" she said very sweetly.

"Naturally, mademoiselle. I thought I was asleep; but I have a habit of saying 'Bravissima' when I hear you."

"No! You have heard me?"

"Who has not, mademoiselle?"

"No?"

He felt she was regarding now not himself, but his weather-beaten hat, his soaked clothes, and the vagrant look that, as an artist on foot, he had exaggeratedly affected; and was pleased that he had no more look of having heard her than the gamekeeper.

"Yes," he said. "I have heard you in Paris and in Vienna. Not in London yet; but now in Laxton, where I welcome you in the name of the people."

"Oh dear, it is terrible! You know me, then?"

"If you permit me, mademoiselle."

"It is equal; but I will see. Who am I then?"

"What voice is like yours but your own? You are Mademoiselle Clari."

EARLY WORKERS.

COMPOSING.

"THE very first step, then, when an Early Worker begins composing, is——"

"To learn his letters."

"Why, of course! That can be understood. Who would think of a boy and composition, unless the boy knew his A, B, C?"

The knowing an A, B, C, however, was not the question. As much as that was brought to comprehension by a quick method.

"Bring p, d, h, b, q, small," was the command of the master-printer, standing amongst the group of busy little boys who were his staff of pupils; upon which,

almost as soon as he had spoken, five little slips of lead were placed in his hand, and he presented them, face forward, in a close upright row.

"Are letters so easy now?" enquired the printing-master. "Can the b be picked from those, and shown to me?"

The picking was done in all confidence, and the letter extracted. The picking was—wrong. So an might be recognisable, possibly, under any conditions; the same of c, the same of many another of the scores and scores of characters with which a poor little Early Worker, on applying his young mind to composing, would have to become familiar. But some letters, when they are topsy-turvy—some letters, when they are compulsorily put right side for left, and left for right—defy identification on mere casual acquaintance. We were obliged to acknowledge, therefore, that to learn them was absolutely a first necessity.

"Well; the second lesson, then, of an Early Worker beginning composing is—"

"To learn his cases."

It sounded more absurd still. "Oh yes, of course—'hic, hæc, hoc,' nom., pos., obj., and other equivalents—beyond a doubt; it is clear it must be so!"

But cases at composing, it came to be seen, were not accusative and so forth. Cases were the large, flat, wooden slides or boxes, with many tiny compartments or divisions in them (conceivable at once, if feminine minds are to be influenced, by likening them to magnified workbox-trays, with the pretty satin padding peeled right off), into each nest of which is put a particular letter, and over all of which half-a-dozen Early Workers were occupied, silent and intent. Laid slantwise and high up were these begrimed old slides or boxes, two for each Early Worker to stand by; the lower box at a gentle angle, the upper so much more aslope that it was a wonder it did not shoot its leaden contents out over the head of its young user, like a sharp shower of flat, oblong hail. Such "cases" required learning distinctly enough—one glance brought that fact home to us. Such cases must present some awkward puzzles to a perturbed little Early Worker. It would not have been so bad, supposing the first of the tiny compartments in these old boxes had held a's, the second b's, the third c's, the fourth d's, and so on, straight along, in alphabetic consecutiveness. It would not have been so bad, either, supposing the compartments had taken this natural order

of letters in that other mode of down and then up again, vertically. But we found that neither of these methods was observed; that matters were arranged on very different principles. From which compartment could a letter most easily be reached?—that it was that determined precedence; followed by the other consideration of: Which are the letters most frequently required? A good deal, this, for a little Early Worker to have to master. It involved that he should know that if a typesetter were sending in a bill, or fount of type (pica), weighing five hundred pounds, there would have to be twelve thousand letter e's in it, and only two hundred letter z's; nine thousand t's, and only five hundred q's; eight thousand n's and eight thousand s's (they are in equal demand), and only three thousand m's; six thousand four hundred h's, and only one thousand seven hundred g's. It involves this, because, as that is the proportion in which letters are required, so it is the principle on which the compartments are filled. Thus, the centre of the case being the most ready to the hand, in the centre of the case does the most useful letter lie—e, this has been shown to be—and accordingly a large hillock of loose e's rises as sun or bull's-eye, whilst its satellites spread round—t and h (for the ever-recurring the) coming up to it by a kind of gambit from the left, like a knight's move at chess; and a n d, for and, crossing it by another gambit, under, beginning at the right hand. Then, beyond all this, there come full-stops, commas, semicolons, interjections, questions, quads (they are to make blanks at the end of fractions of lines, with the further intricacy as to width of em quads and en quads, and of whether they are one em, two em, or larger still), spaces, asterisks, hyphens, quotation-marks, to enumerate no more. Then come the facts that as four thousand five hundred commas are required to two thousand full-stops, that as a "space" is essential between every two words, and there has been many a volume put into type without a single asterisk being used in it at all, so choice of place is exercised over the arrangement of all these also, with Early Workers obliged to be quite intimate with every one. And then come the additional and crushing facts that when all this has been mastered respecting the unequal-sized compartments of the lower-case, it has all to be departed from and thrown aside in dealing with the case called "upper," since that is devoted to

caps. and figs. (i.e., capitals and figures), and since these are wanted pretty much in equal quantities, are arranged in near rotation, and have their compartments, therefore, chequered off pretty equally alike. Truly, it was not surprising that Early Workers stood somewhat spell-bound at composing, working at it with aspects serious and solemn, and even as much as sombre!

"There are all the different shapes and sizes of letters also," said our master-printer; and there, indeed, they were under the hand of an Early Worker, in the shape of a large broadside, or wall-poster, being quickly executed. This had letters as long as the little compositor's young fingers, letters no larger than his nail, letters in skeleton, letters globose with bulginess and fat; letters so small and timid they shrank out of sight; letters bigger again, that stood square and shouldering on solid stumps; letters shorn of any feet or stumps whatever, being mere uncivilised hoops, and hooks, and forks, and signposts; letters, indeed, that differed from each other in character and consequence in almost every line. "And all these and others, do these little people get to know them every one?"

There were so many shapes and sizes of letters—properly, founts or types—taking the whole business of composing from beginning to end, that they would want very much more knowing than an Early Worker would ever have time for, and very much more experience than an Early Worker would be likely to acquire under one roof-top. Printing exists with three grand and broad divisions to it: first, the business carried on in an establishment known as a Book House; next, the business carried on by a News House; lastly, that carried on by a Job House. Naturally one workman keeps to one broad division, since his faculties have been developed in the direction of it; and he is worth more, and can make more money, whilst engaged there. And these Early Workers under inspection, being in a Job House—by which is meant an office where they execute handbills, trade-lists, catalogues, circulars, specifications, billheads, pamphlets, and so on—would have as thorough an acquaintance with founts in all their infinite and ever-growing variety, as they would be likely to obtain anywhere, and as would certainly enable them, when Early Working was done, to follow their trade efficiently.

"Good! So, this little fellow, for

instance; how is it with him? Does he know the name of the type he is putting into words now?"

"What do you say, boy? Can you tell me what this is called?"

The boy could.

"Say it, then; go on."

"It's pica."

"Well, and this?"

"Nonpareil" (compositish for nonpareil).

"And this, lower down?"

The boy had to look a moment, this time, before answering.

"New long primmer" (spelt primer) was his answer, when the moment was over; and that was right.

It further transpired, after some pains-taking consideration and comparison, that the technical term for the type at this moment under the reader's eye is long primer itself; that the running-heads—alias the title at the top of the columns, and continuing all through—are in long primer capitals; and that the date in the little letters, insinuated in the top corner, is the high-sounding nonpareil. Other odd names of types were read off from a list, as expanded skeleton, condensed antique, condensed Roman, bourgeois, Tuscan—the type whose capitals seem tightly tied in at the waist, for effeminacy and shapeliness—ruby, pearl, diamond. One more, lean Roman, called up a vision entirely to itself. Were not Cassius and Caius Ligarius lean Romans?

Caius Ligarius,
Cæsar was ne'er so much your enemy
As that same ague which hath made you lean.
Let me have men about me that are fat;
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights;
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look.

And another Roman presents himself, whilst this queer christening of the type causes momentary digression from the Early Workers so seriously setting it up. The French do not use the term pica—which is pure Latin for magpie—they call it cicero. The type next in size, known as small pica, is, in French, cicero approché, or cicero à petit œil (cicero being a masculine form in Latin, as it happens, of cicera, a kind of pulse or bean). A further peculiarity is that the type pearl is known to the French compositors as mignonette; and to this it shall be added, just as a parenthesis, that the Germans have a graphic name for the signs () by which a parenthesis is known: they call them geese's eyes.

"And now, this very little bit of an Early Worker over here alone; this

solid-headed little chap, who cannot be above eight years old; can he do anything?"

"Put the question straight; he'll answer."

"Well, what is it, mannie? What are you about, eh?"

"I'm sorting pie."

This Early Worker had, we now perceived, a small heap of leaden letters under his unaccustomed—and well-nigh as leaden—fingers; and the poor little chap was taking one leaden letter from the heap, in a leaden manner, and one letter, and one, and one again; and was forming them into smaller leaden heaps, sedulously kept apart.

That, then, was sorting pie. Pie might be supposed to be corrupted from pica, or to be short for magpie direct and straight; at any rate, it meant letters—type; and let there be ever such a short day's work done by Early Workers at composing—or by older hands—letters will be sure to slip themselves out of "chases" and cases, will be sure to be left littering upon imposing-surfaces and on "bulks," will be sure to get scattered about upon the floor; and when these have all been swept up together into some receptacle, it is essential they should be put back into their sorts again; it is essential, in other words, that they should get their sorting.

"Well, and when this is done, little man, what is it then?"

"Then"—with the same solemnity, the same leaden-moving fingers, the same grave eyes and serious sound—"after dis here is sorted, I have to sort more."

Solid young Early Worker! To which, let this much be added, with regard to the manipulation of pica-pie, whether in Latin form or English, it is not the pie that comes up to Early Workers' tastes; they hate it; consequently (or, perhaps, because), the sorting of it is given as mild punishment, to expiate, in a manner, petty breaches of composing discipline.

"Well"—to another little man, of another sort and size, at another stand—"what is it called that you are doing?"

"Dissing."

He could not have heard. At best, he could not have understood. If anyone were "dissing," it was surely that other and substantial little fellow just past, with his "dis" here and his "dis" there, that told how young and unformed his

speech was in him. But explanation was ready. To "dis" was short for to "distribute;" to distribute was to take type to pieces, after printing from, and to put all the pieces carefully away; so this little Early Worker was distributing, and thereby doing a proper piece of composing-duty that all, old or young, compositors must be prepared to undertake. Right enough; yet was it not very much the same after all as sorting pie? To be sure, it was curiously like it; a twin occupation, wholesale instead of retail, with only this deep-cut difference, that "dissing" must be done—and forthwith, or want of sufficient hundredweights of type would prevent composing being proceeded with at all; and that sorting pie may be done—being in such small quantities—either now, or in a month, or in a quarter; with the inevitable result that as it is a thing wherein evasion is possible, evasion wins, and the doing is left for an elementary labour, or for a fine. Distributing, however, contains much more than the mere putting back of c's amongst c's, and d's amongst d's, and so on, according to nonpareil-ship, ruby-hood, and the like, as is the absolute beginning and end of pie-sorting. Distributing commences at the far-away point where the printing-press, or the stereotyping process, dismisses the massive tablets of type as done with, and decrees that they need no longer be stored up for re-usage. These type-tablets—which have all along looked like chipped old slates in battered old frames, into which a thousand school-imps have scooped their small initials, scooping them upside down, of course—must at this point be submitted to rigid washing. This is done, because printing, omitting any allusion to stereotyping, leaves behind it flourishing settlements of viscous ink, deep down in "shank," and "seriffs," and "beard;" and because, if the rinsing or washing be left undone, or be done inefficiently, the letters "bake," i.e. will dry together, and stick so hard and fast, that the compositor has to knock them against his case to part them. The washing over, the Early Worker must raise his type-tablet (technically, his "forme") on to a flat surface, and must get it "unlocked." He takes his mallet and shooting-stick—the latter being an implement that, in a trade where talk is serious and dictionary meanings are attended to, would be called a large iron nail or spike—and hitting the mallet down upon the spike with as much strength as he possesses, his

work is to knock out the little oblong pieces of wood known as quoins. The use of these has been to wedge in firmly the side-sticks and foot-sticks surrounding the type, keeping them accurately in the centre of the chase, and leaving no chance for spot or stroke, letter or blank, to become contumacious and "fall out;" and when these have felt the hit of the shooting-stick and the blow of the mallet that has given it aim, and have yielded to it and shot away, therein is all that is necessary, and the unlocking is completed. The Early Worker finds his type loose after this; he can take it up line by line; he can pick out reglet and "quad," and letter and space, and hyphen and "fig." and full-stop and comma, with the greatest rapidity, and he can put back each tiny item into its allotted compartment as rapidly as he can touch. A thousand letters in an hour—about seventeen in a minute—is the rate at which a boy is expected to set up type, that is, to make it into words; he is quicker still over pulling words to pieces, and the subsequent "dissing," since all characters are standing the right way up in type that is fresh unlocked, which shows the "sort" of them immediately, and since there is no need to be particular as to which way characters fall when they are being thrown—or distributed—into their compartments, ready to be used again. And, as this is so, if a letter occasionally gets wrongly thrown in, and in due time gets wrongly set up, in place of one of the sort among which it has been found, can there not be understanding of the wrong, and a right forgiveness? Besides, whatever error an Early Worker at composing makes, an Early Worker at composing has to unmake, when his work has been through the press for proof of it, and the errors glare themselves into recognition. Back to him his forme is brought, the sheet that has been printed from it being brought back with it, and, after "reading," straightway correcting has to be effected. An Early Worker chancing to be about this very business, not far from the standing-place of the little "disser," his labours afforded an apt illustration. This boy had the struck-off page in front of him, its wrong work scored through admonitorily in rich red lines; had the battered old chase quite close up, for correcting to be easily done to it, without stretch of hand; the boy had the page placed readably, in proper orthodox

mode and manner, down-strokes and tails downwards, number—legible and isolated—at the head, and there was interest in examining the type to see with what readiness errors could be detected. The result was, they could get no detection at all. The place, even, of them evaded discovery. Fractions of lines at the ends of sentences in the page were looked for, in the shape of fractions of lines to match in the type, to act as starting-points to find the particular sentence from which the wrong word was to be drawn out; but fractions of lines in the type were not present in the same positions and order—had no feint of correspondence.

"How can you find it?" was asked, with some of the sting of bafflement. "What is it by which you tell?" The aggravation being that the young Early Worker had his little fingers nimbly scuttling a hole out of the middle of the leaden puzzle, had his little fingers just as nimbly at work the next moment in filling the hole up, everything seeming mere day-by-day routine to him, as easy-going as habit.

"See the line, I do," answered the boy, simply; "see the page;" the simple commonplaceness of facts sitting upon him sadly, and stirring him up to no interest in demeanour.

Stirring him up to no elucidation either, as far as regards his words. This came unconsciously. Whilst he was yet speaking—sadly, as all through—pointing to the line, and pointing to the page; and the number lay at the foot, the foot lay at the head, the up was down, the down was up, the sentences ran topsy-turvy, the ends were beginnings, the beginnings were ends, bringing all blanks and spaces—and all brain-senses included—exactly contrary.

Things were not righted, either, when the young workman was asked if his work would "rise."

"Rise, now!" And coming after baking, and pie, and batter—of which something was said just now sideways—and coming after a further sideway allusion a little while before to a dripping-pan! There never could be poor Early Workers, in any other place, surrounded by such tantalising namings!

For all that, "to rise" was a very mechanical and necessary ceremony. It could be called "to lift," if that were preferred; and sometimes was (as though it were any more sane to ask if a

square foot or so of leaden letters could lift!); and the question simply meant, were the letters locked up tight enough in the chase, for the forme to be carried away without any of the letters tumbling out? It is a question an adult compositor, in an adult composing-room, puts to himself intently; for it is at his own cost (when on piecework), if, when he takes up his forme, his work falls to pieces. He has to distribute the pie and to recompose the matter, and can make no charge for so doing. To which there may be added here incidentally, that, if a workman writes down in his bill more hours' work than he ought to have written, all such excessive charge is called "horse." Then, as to batter, that could be very innocently explained. It came when letters, after "locking up," became injured by some tiny object being dropped upon them, and the tiny object being dented tight in through the dead squeezing of the press. When the impression of such letters lay upon the paper they had no shape for reading, only a smear; and there the "batter" was. Reverting to the dripping-pan, it was exactly what might be thought—a tinned iron pan, the whole length of a printing-press, to catch the oil perpetually running off.

After gravely taking in this information, attention was fixed on the little corrector, who, it was observed, stuck all his new words, as soon as he had set them up, into his mouth, whence he could extract them instantly when their locus had been prepared, and he was ready to pop them in. But no sense of the humour of this was with the young Early Worker. This was ascertained to a certainty when, on locking and un-locking his chases, his little quoins, or wedges (shooting out sometimes too rapidly, at others being wickedly hard to be shot in), were noticed to be nearly like the handy two-inch neat and oblong wooden battings in a child's box of bricks.

"So," we suggested, influenced, no doubt, by the child-like surroundings, "you can play with these, sometimes, eh? Do you ever build these up, in play hours, into bridges, and churches, and castles?"

This was a puzzler for our little friend.

"Church?" he said slowly, quite adrift; "castle?"

For familiarity with his material had brought him its precise measurement and value. At work upon quoins, his quoins

remained quoins, and suggested nothing else to his imagination.

"You can't do nothing with them," he arrived at at last, when the idea had been grasped, and he sank back to work; "they're fick at one end; they're fin at the other. You can't do nothing—see."

As if a happy child of wholesome breeding would not have made the very "fickness" and "finness" the means of something, and would not have made that something on the spot! But this little Early Worker and the other little Early Workers at composing with him, belonged not to the band of happy children of wholesome breeding. They were under safe shelter when their poor, coarse hands were seen busy at composition, when their poor seriousness and solemnity seemed worked and woven in as a portion of their calling, for they were in an Industrial School,* in a large and lofty building, with plenty of light to cheer them, plenty of air to breathe, and with the good accessories of excellent instruction, and cleanliness, and discipline. Morally and physically the mantle of sunshine and peace had fallen upon them; they were in a haven where all their absolute wants were being attended to, and where no harm could come. These children—although, by parentage, by bad inheritance, by impure example, tenants, many of them, of the hideous republic of crime, and want, and laziness, and violence—had been snatched out of that black seam or stratum that is knitted well-nigh inextricably in and out every fair kingdom of better things, and that generous philanthropists are striving to battle with hard and fast. No child-life had been theirs, in its happy sense. They were allowed now the coveted distinction of good-conduct stripes for special services of integrity, and the childish luxury of small pocket-money for extra application to labour; they were fed, clothed, lodged (although with some rigour, absolutely indispensable to counteract old vicious habits of vagrancy, theft, deceit); they were taught school-skill in addition to the trade-skill by which in the future they could earn their bread. But in the outer world they had known blows, and oaths, and squalor, and starvation (one, as an actual fact, had been picked up off a dust-heap, gnawing a castaway bone); and was this good nursery-ground for childhood's ever-varying expedients and imagination?

* St. Paul's, Burdett Road.

The sense of this came quickly. The knowledge of the deep significance of it could not be cast out, and it brought the widest pity. Yet the little compositors were to be left now; it would be well if some little gleam of a smile could be obtained by way of a light good-bye, and as there was one point, among many, that had not been put, it was tried.

"Now," we asked, "in any talking of composition and compositors, something is said of 'fat.' Do you know it?"

The boy woke up. It was quite evident he did know all about it.

"Well?"

"It's when——"

"Well, go on."

"It's when there's plenty of short pages, plenty of space between the lines, and plenty of short lines."

"And do you call it fat because it's nice to do?"

The boy nodded.

"So," with the action pleasantly comprehended, and the question put to the master for corroboration, "compositors prefer blank spaces to words, and short lines to full-length ones?"

"They do."

"And in the trade generally? Not only with the Early Workers?"

"In the whole trade; everywhere."

"Making short talk makes fat then; and this little bit of question and answer, if it were put into type at once, would be a very nice piece of fat indeed?"

"Yes."

"Yes?"

"Yes."

To which there may be put the fact that, by strict printing rule, no "copy" should be selected by compositors; they would be sure to choose pages containing plenty of "breaks." It should be dealt out fairly, so much and so much, just as it comes. Fat, then, has an equal chance of being received by all. There is, of course, a reverse to copy that is fat; the name of it is "lean," otherwise a "solid dig." It cannot be said that printers' language is not expressive.

altered at Lime'us, I can tell you. Years ago people used to come here, to enjoy their pint and pipe and look at the steam-boats. But you can see steamboats almost anywhere now. Yes; it is a fine view for them as likes the waterside. You can see a'most from London-bridge on your right down to Greenwich on your left."

Mine host of the Waterman's Arms, Limehouse, is in the right. From the rickety wooden gallery where he holds forth to me, I make out that the famous old tavern is pitched, as it were, in the elbow formed by the Thames between the Tower and Deptford. The dark waters of the Pool are just now tipped with silver and the wavelets glitter like the scales of some great serpent between black masses of shipping, ever and anon assuming weird unearthly shapes, as of the ghosts of bygone vessels returned for the nonce from Davy Jones's safe keeping. Tall chimneys rear their gaunt forms against the pale sky, cold and smokeless, the ghostly monuments of departed prosperity, the skeletons of dead industries. Over all there is a great silence. Not the plash of an oar is heard at the river-front of the ancient inn with the water-gate to it; the only sign of human life being the red light of the screw-steamer stealing noiselessly down on the Surrey side. On the landside of the Waterman's Arms there is a fair trade doing and much excellent ale consumed, but the part whence I look upon the broad silent river shimmering in the moonlight is never visited by chance custom. It is one of the last representatives of a class of taverns now rapidly passing away. As the waterside custom has departed, and the business on the landside become all important, the old houses have been gradually rebuilt—on the plan of a modern gin-palace—the picturesque galleries and waterside rooms disappearing entirely. One by one the green-painted bulging water-fronts vanish, and every sign of the old waterside traffic is obliterated. Even the few which now remain are left to the rats, and the stairs running down to the water are slowly rotting away, and dropping piecemeal into the ooze and slime. In the old days when the silent highway was the great thoroughfare, and the Thames police were not so busy as the crimps, and press-gangs, and smugglers, these water-gates were useful for a variety of purposes, and, until the recent wholesale demolition set in, the

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

BEER BELOW BRIDGE.

"YES, sir. This old house is just as it always was, barring that we never set out the waterside room now. There it is, still holding together, the room is, but the company is gone long ago. Times are

features of the whole riverside inns were well worthy of study. The Anchor and Hope, amply furnished with rooms bulging out over the river, yet preserved the steps down which thousands of passengers swarmed to the Gravesend boats, and treasured the memory of subterranean passages and chambers where the press-gangs concealed their victims, until they were shipped on to the night-boats. The Prospect of Whitby is another place with a history. About it lingers an aroma of tobacco and Schiedam, Nantz and negro-head, which paid no dues to the Crown. Here again were subterranean passages and snug hiding-places for riverside Will Watch, and many a stroke of business was done over a pipe and a bowl of punch brewed from right Jamaica. The Old Pewter Platter long enjoyed an amphibious existence, but for many years past has lost that character, the river having retired and left it high and dry. This is a place notorious in local legend. Queer tales of the uses to which the trap-doors once overhanging the water were put are common in the neighbourhood, and a labyrinth of disused and choked-up passages stamp it as the scene of strange and secret deeds. The David and Harp, like many of these old waterside houses, has undergone a process of renovation, like that which has swept away the great green galleries and projecting rooms of the Gun at Blackwall, and left in their stead clean and wholesome but unpicturesque brickwork. But the Waterman's Arms is yet untouched, and presents the most perfect type of the riverside tavern now extant. Relics of bygone splendour may yet be found within its ancient walls, although the paintings have long since faded out; and the fireplace, big enough to roast a baron of beef, has not seen the preparations of a great feast within the memory of man. Mine host—straw-hatted and generally nautical as to his make-up—drops into the ancient settle in the ingle-nook, as I stray out once more and let weird fancies crowd upon me. What stories of hearty mirth and of strong-handed evil-doing could these old panelled walls relate; what records of wrong and trickery, what tales of rage and fear and bitter tears! Readers of the long roll of England's naval glory and the triumphantly successful career of the Great Republic of the West rarely pause to think of the cost of these achievements to the poor if not lowly; but they may be read in the novels, the dramas, and

the popular songs of the last century, when crimping was a profitable business.

To these aquatic taverns were dragged helplessly drunken or drugged victims, to awake on board a ship laden with the sweepings of gaols, to provide labour for the king's plantations in Maryland, Virginia, and the West Indies. Help or redress there was none—the only law being that of the handspike and rope's-end. We read with horror of lettres de cachet and oubliettes, without giving a thought to the thousands of free Englishmen, who were kidnapped and shipped for the plantations in the good old time. More glorious, but little less hard, was the fate of those captured by the press-gangs, for ever prowling by the waterside during the great war, when a thwack on the head with a stick was the prelude to an enforced service of years. When the king's ships wanted men, law and justice were set aside, and poor Jack was torn from home and kindred, half smothered in a cellar at Limehouse, and then quietly shipped off to wear away the soreness of his heart in fighting the "Johnny Crapaws." Less saddening are the records of smuggling, for the mind of man has ever failed to thoroughly appreciate the heinousness of cheating the revenue; and there was a species of free and sporting air about smuggling, which caused it to be regarded, even by steady-going, God-fearing men, in much the same light that a Wessex peasant looks upon poaching. It was a thing to be proud of, to write songs about, and included the consumption of a vast quantity of strong drink—an important consideration to the genuine old salt. Under the dark shadows of the long lines of shipping, boats with muffled oars crept silently to the old waterside tavern, and slunk under the projecting rooms into which the goods were hoisted through trap-doors, equally convenient for receiving them, or disposing of the victim of a sudden brawl; while from the great rooms above, and the leads in summer time, arose the sound of coarse revelry, snatches of sea-songs, and others less innocent in character, rough jest, and rougher repartee, the whole studded with a wealth of strange oaths. All this rough, breezy, not altogether unmanly, or un-English life, has passed away as utterly as Captain Dangerous himself, and I stand on the gallery of the Waterman's Arms gazing on the magnificent moonlit scene, as completely alone as if the old wooden structure I

occupy had never rung with laughter, or reeked with the fumes of punch and tobacco. Groping my way through a dusky room, I see long-shore men drinking modest beer at the bar, and wander into the street, to find that the once notorious Globe and Pigeon is turned into a coffee-shop, and Tom King's old haunt metamorphosed into a gin-palace.

It is a change from the silent riverside to noisy Salmon's-row, glaring with gas-light and alive with the clatter of Saturday night's market. Whatever may be said of the poverty of a portion of the East-end, there appears to be money under the shadow of Limehouse Church. The butchers are doing a roaring trade, but are doing it cautiously, with a screen of wooden lattice-work to protect their meat from the hand of the spoiler. A brisk business, too, is doing in old clothes, in fried fish, and in dried haddocks. The latter reminds me that I have promised to visit a "smoker," whose acquaintance I made at Billingsgate one cold November morning, when he astonished me by the quantity of fish he bought and paid for. A short stroll down "Donkey-row" brings me to the home of the genuine town-made "Finnan haddie" of commerce. There is nothing Scottish about the dwelling of the smoker—a slight odour of whisky being almost lost in the aroma of the smoke-house. His house is unambitious in appearance, being in fact but one storey high—but he has plenty of space behind for his smoke-house—admirably arranged, and scrupulously clean. It is a series of wooden chimneys, with fires burning at their base, and furnished with ledges, on which rest the cross-sticks strung with fish. My smoker is an artist, as well as a man of business. He is aware that the large-sized haddock is not prized by the connoisseur, who knows that it is not the genuine Finnan article; and therefore gives extraordinary care to the preparation of the smaller specimens, which, when sufficiently smoked, bear the stamp of authenticity. He cures them to perfection, and his fish find their way—I could tell how, but that I have the fear of libel before my eyes—into the market as real "Finnan haddies." Having been brought up in a serious family, where I was taught to speak the truth at all hazards, I venture a slight remonstrance on hearing of this palpable deceit; but my host disposes of my scruples by the assertion that, first, the lie is not a lie, being "in the way of business," and

then proceeds to declare that fish cured by him are every bit as good as—in fact, rather better than—those cured in Scotland; clinching his argument by offering to bet me a "fiver"—he has plenty of "fivers" in his greasy pocket—that I cannot tell one from the other. I retire from his challenge by the poor, evasive remark that he is a sporting character, and I am not, and I am then entrusted with the sorrow of his life—the decadence and final extinction of the prize-ring. "Pigeons is pleasure," he remarks, "and dawgs is delightful, and cock-fightin' ain't bad; but give me a genuine good mill down the river, and I'm as jolly as a sand-boy." Hoping to make the acquaintance of a sand-boy some day, and thus be enabled to judge of the unparalleled pitch of hilarity attainable by that favoured individual, I deprecate reference to the prize-ring, and turn the subject to fish-curing. "I will take you round to see a pal," continues my smoker. "You have just paid a visit to Finnan. I will take you to Yarmouth and to Newfoundland." Completely taken down, I trudge out into Donkey-row again, and follow my conductor through a labyrinth of narrow streets, till we arrive at our destination. The "pal" is not a haddock but a herring smoker, and is prepared to lay six to four on his fish against any cured in Yarmouth. He buys them at Billingsgate, and sells them—I may not say to whom, but they are eaten by gourmands as the peculiar product of Yarmouth. This "pal" is a great economist, and is careful to catch in tin trays every drop of oil that exudes from the luscious herring in the process of smoking. This he stores until he has several barrels of it, and then finds for it a mysterious market. "What is done with it?" I ask, naturally enough. "I don't want to know," he answers—"but I think; well, I know—that it is made into cod-liver oil. You may or may not know that we do clever things at the East-end. We make butter here by the ton without the cow; but that is nothing. I was sold once myself. I drove the missis out to Epping, and thought it would be good business to bring home some sausages. It was a long time before I could find the shop, and then they told me I could not have any sausages, for the cart had not yet come down from Chiswell-street."

Wandering out of the genuine Yarmouth atmosphere, we proceed to refresh the inner man at the Walnut Tree, an

hostelry held in great esteem in the East-end for the quality of its beer and the ghastliness of its associations. To a certain order of mind, not—as the female audience at the trial of Wainwright bore witness—by any means confined to the poor and ignorant, the atmosphere of crime is particularly agreeable. Bright, wholesome beer drunk over the bar at the Walnut Tree is pleasant no doubt, but the true local zest can only be enjoyed in the taproom—religiously preserved with the original fireplace and settles, just as it was on the day when a startled servant, looking into the bench-box used as a coal-scuttle, discovered the head of Greenacre's unhappy paramour. There is revelry of the noisy, market-kind at the Walnut Tree. One known as "Whipper" is the centre of fun. Every rag on Whipper's wiry body jumps for joy. His coat is split up the back, his pantaloons are in an awesome condition. He is begrimed with dirt and bedizened with knots of ribbon, which inadequately bring his tattered garments on terms with each other. Whipper is not of any particular profession, having been from his youth upward of a cheerful tone of mind averse from regular employment. His feet are apt to a breakdown, and his hands naturally fall into a scientific attitude. Yet Whipper is, I am told, of respectable family—a farmer's son, but the black sheep of the homestead, the enfant terrible of the little Essex village where he was born. Whipper, like most little men, is pugnacious. He is ready to fight on the slightest provocation, and passes his life in rough-and-tumble encounters, which to him constitute the salt of existence. Like men of loftier station, he is the representative of the principle of reaction, which brings the sons and grandsons of successful men down again to the ranks. We all know his analogues in other circles of society—the heir to a coronet who cannot keep his hands from stamped paper, and the earl's son who cannot write his own name upon it, but sportively signs that of the wealthy peer at whose house he is staying on a visit; the son of the gallant soldier, who, after years of impunity, is discovered cheating at cards, and is hurled out of society into the nebulous borderland of divorced women and ostracised men; and the children of the successful "navvy," ultimately developed into a great contractor, who drink themselves into the grave as their grandfather did before them. Instances of this persistent

downward tendency are easy to multiply. Scores of "frightful examples" may be found at Boulogne, at Jersey, at the inland watering-places of the Continent, in the dull towns of Belgium, in the gold-fields of California and Australia, in the diamond-fields of Africa, and in the slums of London. All moral sense is long since gone, but there is yet in the red-nosed, glassy-eyed tatterdemalion something—perhaps it is his voice, despite its huskiness—which plainly tells that once he lived amid widely different surroundings. Whipper is as one of these. He loves to sing the old country ditty, "The King cannot swagger, nor get drunk like a beggar, nor be half so happy as I"—a statement hardly accurate, at least, in its initial proposition. He is to all appearances happy enough, and is perhaps somewhat unfairly classed with many of those just enumerated, for he is honest enough. He is only hopelessly idle and afflicted with an insatiable desire for beer, which, acting on the Whipperian constitution like fighting rum upon that of the New York loafer, occasionally introduces him to the interior of a station-house.

Not being very far from Bluegate-fields, newly christened Victoria-street, I elect to pay a visit to an old friend, who prefers the intoxication of opium to that of beer. Johnson, as my Chinese friend is called, is no cleaner than of yore—his stairs are as grimy, and the atmosphere of his den is as stifling, as ever; but there is now about his habitation a tone of unreality, as of a show-place, with a few Chinamen playing the part of opium-smokers, and Johnson on the look-out to show the trick of opium-smoking and take the half-crowns bestowed by his numerous visitors. Probably, when Johnson of the oddly-humorous countenance was first discovered, he was the genuine keeper of an opium tavern, and made his living out of his pig-tailed compatriots by selling opium, as the landlord of the Waterman's Arms sells beer. But since he has become known, not to say celebrated, and spruce young dandies oft make up a party to start from a West-end club and "do" the East-end, Mr. Johnson has, I take it, learned to prize his visitors more, and his legitimate customers less. No doubt he has made money, although, with the "peculiarity" of his race pointed out by Mr. Bret Harte, he keeps all his surroundings as squalid as ever. His customers, or "stool pigeons," are more difficult to keep in, or rather out

of condition. They have none of the weird ghastliness proper to the opium-smoker. That fat Chinaman in the corner, whose hide shines with the lustre of bronze, is, I would go bail, a much greater consumer of heavy-wet than of the juice of the poppy. And these lads, laughing till their eyes sparkle again as they catch the familiar sounds, "gin" and "beer," are assuredly not given to narcotics. They are playing a mysterious game with shirt-buttons, which I solicit Johnson to explain; but that gay deceiver flies off at once into such a wildly incoherent description, that I give him up in despair. As I walk down the creaking stairs, I feel that I am the poorer by one illusion. Yet there is hope. I will look up the Lascar opium-den, where business was wont to be brisk. It is some time before my knock is answered, and then I find that there is no business doing, and that the house is to be thoroughly cleansed, and made decently habitable. Great heaven, it was time! but I own that I do not quite understand how it is to be done. I may be an unjust and prejudiced occidental, but I hold the opinion that, after a house has been inhabited for any length of time by orientals, only one thing remains to be done with it, and that is, to apply petroleum and lucifer matches in a manner likely to bring the apostle of purification into the dock of the Old Bailey.

From the opium-dens to the Greek wine-shop in Ratcliff-highway is not a very long walk, but a score of years ago it was likely to prove adventurous. It is not attended with any very great risk now, for the police have got a tight hand on the worst part of the Eastern population, and Jack, whether English or foreign, is mending his manners as rapidly as any other working-man. Sailors' homes are gradually rescuing him from the clutches of the crimp, and tea and bread and butter are taking the place of rum and tobacco. There are dull times in the Highway just now, and the wine imported by our Greek acquaintance remains longer in the barrel perched on his counter than he cares for. There is wailing too at Paddy's Goose over the jolly old times now gone by, and a cry of Ichabod arises from the Mahogany Bar. Perhaps these resorts have suffered from the competition of the recently opened music-hall in the Mile-end-road, an enormous place built over a garden, where order is kept, at least as severely as in similar places of amusement farther west.

As Lunsby's pours out its thousands into the broad thoroughfare, I observe that business is going briskly on in every direction; and, after a tankard at the Blind Beggar of Bethnal-green, transfer my person from the far East to a haunt in the far West, where I can indulge my modest taste, by wearing a green velvet coat and a pink necktie, without exciting the horror that such an apparition would produce in Clubland proper.

A MINE OF WEALTH.

"JACK!" shouted my worthy brother Dick, bursting into my chambers in the classic precincts of Pump-court, and waking me out of my beauty sleep at ten o'clock in the morning—"Jack, I am going to make both our fortunes at last!"

"Go to—ugh!" I replied, and pulled the blankets over my ears again, not even caring to particularise the precise direction of Dick's intended destination. Poor Dick! He had made my fortune half-a-dozen times before, and the net result had not been of a nature to induce the sacrifice of any part of a night's rest in anticipation of the seventh.

"No, but really, old man, it's the straight tip this time, and no mistake. Look here. You're a dramatic critic?"

"Which," I replied, with feeble sarcasm, "is why you rouse me up in the middle of the night, after writing a column and a half about a four hours' monument of imbecility, which wasn't over till past twelve?"

"Never mind, old fellow. Look here. You know what asses managers are?"

"You don't mean to say one of them has accepted——"

"Get out. No. I don't. But I was introduced last night to old What's-his-name—you know—manager of the Thingumbob, and he has given me the run of all his MSS., and promised me half profits from anything good I can find. Meant it for chaff, you know, the old humbug. But I knew better. We'll go into 'em together this blessed day, and you shall have half. It's a mine of wealth, old fellow, that's what it is. A mine of wealth."

Poor Dick! I hadn't the heart to refuse him, and he really does want his fortune making badly. Besides, I was awake now, broad enough, and it would probably in the end take less time to wade through the mighty brown-paper parcel he had

lugged into the room, and thumped down with a crash upon my ricketiest table, than to convince him—or induce him to depart unconvinced—in any other way.

"Look here, old fellow!" is his one unanswerable argument. "There must be some good plays written."

"Must there?" I answer doubtingly. "I don't know that."

"Of course there must. And you know what rubbish is brought out."

How can I reply, but with a groan? I do know that.

"Well then," is his triumphant answer, "where can all the good ones be? Why here, of course." And Dick slaps his hand on the big brown-paper parcel joyfully and hopefully. So, registering a mental vow to take it out of Mr. What's-his-name of the Thingumbob—whoever he might eventually prove to be—in regard to the very next piece he might be rash enough to submit to my outraged judgment, I surrender; order in brandies and sodas, and prepare to dig my way into poor Dick's mine of wealth. Let me at starting assure my readers that the literary treasures at whose disinterment they are about to assist, were verily the real, actual, and entire contents of the MS. chest of one of our leading London theatres, and that the account here given is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning them, the extracts given in all cases verbatim, literatim, et punctuatim.

The first piece that comes to hand is big enough, at all events. It is closely written too, in a small hand, not particularly legible, and even sanguine Dick can protest but feebly against my suggestion of weighing it in the scales of common life, before submitting it to those of criticism. It proves to be a little under half a stone, or about the weight of fifty copies of an ordinary daily paper; and as a diligent search of some minutes fails in bringing to light any scene in which more than two characters are introduced at a time, and as even Dick does not see his way to any startling success for a duologue, let us say three or four nights long, we put our ponderous friend on one side, and drive the shaft a little farther down the mine.

"Can't be all nuggets, you know," says Dick, cheerily, and seizes upon another goodly volume in its business-like brown-paper wrapper. Largely and clearly written this one, with all the honours of red ink for its stage directions, which are numerous and explicit. On the whole,

perhaps, rather more explicit than practicable. Here, for instance, is the first passage at which the MS. happens to open:

VALERIA. See yonder dark-eyed girl. She loves your slave.

[VALERIA appears to lose her love for ESCA suddenly, through jealousy.]

A little farther on, this fair rival of our old friend, Lord Burleigh, is called upon to perform a less elevated but equally difficult feat, being instructed, while standing at the sideboard with the tribune, to "pass her arm over his shoulder and change the position of a goblet," into which that worthy has been secretly pouring poison. A little farther on we have the Roman amphitheatre, with the famous combat of net and trident carried out by the principal actors in all its details to the bitter end. In short the play is, as we find on turning to the title-page, a faithful transcript of Whyte-Melville's *Gladiators*, "adapted" to the stage with all that simplicity of treatment in the way of turning description into stage direction, and all that touching confidence in the boundlessness of stage room, and in the resources of scenery, effects, and so forth, which are ever so pleasing a characteristic of this phase of amateur dramatic art. Recalling to mind the story and its catastrophe, I turn to the last scene for Valeria's death, which is in this wise:

ESCA. Mariamne, dearest, there is a sword if thou canst only reach it.

[MARIAMNE tries, but is repulsed by the smoke. VALERIA now comes on, followed by LICINIUS. As ELEAZAR sees her he hurls his spear at her, and then the whole barricade on which he is standing gives way, and he falls into the flames. As the spear strikes VALERIA she sinks down.]

"Rough on Valeria," assents Dick, a trifle grimly. Then, plucking up again: "But, after all, we don't want adaptations, you know. It is the original dodge we're after." So Lady Valeria follows her bulky predecessor to the limbo of the window-seat, and Dick digs out another shovelful of ore. Something very "original" this time. Nothing less than our ancient friend the Flying Dutchman, newly adapted for the stage in very similar fashion to the last. "Confound it," says Dick, and sends the offending adaptation fluttering wildly to its way. Then, for the fourth time, he dives into the big parcel and brings up this time three brown-paper volumes, which on examination prove to be a faithful

translation of *Patrie*. "Confound it," says Dick again.

And now, for another half-hour or more, we plough our way with grim determination through a score or so of farces and comediettas. "Strictly original" some of them proclaim themselves, and there is on the whole not much reason to doubt the fact, for it is difficult to imagine the source from which they could have been stolen; and as each aspiring MS. finds its way, with a jerk, from the reader's hands to the fast-growing heap of condemned rubbish in the window-seat, the said reader looks up with a grunt and a shrug at his fellow-sufferer, half-way through another on the opposite side of the table, and receives a shrug and a growl in reply. Sweet little harmless things are most of the manuscripts, after all. Some hail from grave business addresses in the City; some from the fashionable precincts of Pall-mall; some from the high official quarter of Whitehall; some from the less distinguished Mile-end-road. One, about the best of them, is by a young lady down in Devonshire, and notwithstanding a score or so of fatal drawbacks in the way of multiplicity of scenes, obscurity of action, inadequacy of motive, and so forth, gives really fair promise of being the precursor, say half-a-dozen years hence, of something good. Another, one would say from a still younger lady, comes all the way from Glasgow, written in clear round-hand on sixteen pages of a small copy-book, and shows, in three scenes which would play something less than three minutes each, how clever Charlie Compton and his friends dressed themselves up like three fiends, and frightened hard-hearted old Jonathan into consenting to clever Charlie's marriage with the old miser's pretty daughter, with a fortune of at least three million pounds. A third discloses the domestic complications which arise in the household of a preaching citizen from the unprecedented and unsatisfiable demand for lodgings occasioned by the arrival in London of that unrivalled tragedian, Mr. B—y S—n. Several would really do rather nicely for very amateur theatricals of the extreme back drawing-room type. Two or three have an amount of dramatic capability—as might no doubt be predicted with equal certainty of about everything yet written, from the first book of Euclid to the last page of this year's Post-office Directory, which, in the hands of a popular low comedian, and with a

rather more than usually energetic exercise of his power of "development," might serve to "play the people out" efficiently enough. We come to the end of them at last, imbibe a fresh brandy and soda, and are thankful.

After this interval of repose we refresh ourselves further with a ballet, a little weak in its mythology, but elegantly illustrated with water-colour sketches of the principal scenes and characters. And so we work our way back to the serious business, Dick's hopes reviving as we light upon an Irish drama. And there is no denying that here and there, among the loose foolscap sheets upon which he pounces so eagerly, are signs of, at all events, some power of appreciating the dramatic features of preceding works. Nor is the play altogether devoid of originality. The incidents and characters, of course, are those with which we were tolerably familiar, even before the days of Mr. Boucicault; but some of the stage directions are new and naïf. "Here"—i.e., after a dozen pages or so of minute cross-examination—"here the jury interfere, saying they have quite made up their minds that O'Reilly had nothing to do with it, and further that Mr. Jones had not been fired at at all"—a truly Irish addendum—"and that it looked very like a conspiracy on the part of Darby O'Rourke. The court breaks up, Miles being discharged." Or again, "All start for the village of Jehageda, where there is a small roadside public-house. Father Murphy goes in and soon returns with a respectable peasant woman, widow Holahan."

We are getting very near the bottom of the mine now, and despite the soothing influence of the brandies and sodas, Dick's face is lengthening considerably. There are only five MSS. left, and the first of these is very brief, only thirty-four small copy-book pages not too closely written. It is not without originality either, of a kind. The thirty-four pages contain three acts and nine scenes, the last thirteen pages being devoted to a full-length trial, in the sheriff's court, of an action for damages for false imprisonment, the proceedings in the said action being, by some beneficent arrangement—no doubt specially provided for the trial of such cases in sheriff's courts—confined strictly to the speeches first of the plaintiff's counsel, which recapitulates the incidents as presented in the previous twenty-one pages, and then of

the judge, which recapitulates the speech of the counsel for the plaintiff. The case under such circumstances is, I need hardly say, so clear that the jury can not only dispense with the vulgar and time-wasting process of hearing evidence, but are able at once, without even calling upon the defendant's counsel for his version of the affair, to return at once a verdict for the plaintiff, with damages one thousand pounds. So the audience have some cause to congratulate themselves at all events. The next two pieces have nothing very special about them. They are simply, as Mr. Alfred Jingle said of the fourteen packing-cases which were coming down to Rochester by the smack, "heavy, heavy, d——d heavy." And now only two are left. Dick and I drink the last brandy and soda between us, toss up for the last cigar—which of course falls to him—and taking a MS. apiece prepare ourselves for the worst. Suddenly—

"By Jove!" I exclaim.

"By Jove!" thunders Dick, with the simultaneous fidelity of an Irish echo.

And then we lay our MSS. down and look at each other enquiringly.

"I've got it, Dick," say I at last.

"So have I, old man," and Dick slaps his broad hand down upon the MS. and nods solemnly.

"Verse, mine is, Dick!"

"So's mine, old man—blank!"

"By Jove!"

"By Jove!"

And then for a time there is a silence, broken only by the rustling of the quick-turning leaves, as each expectant critic devotes himself to the mastery of the particular work of art before him. My task is the first completed, and, as I lay the MS. aside, Dick looks up eagerly for my judgment.

"We were looking for something original, Dick," I observe solemnly, "and we have got it, at last. Listen; the piece is entitled *Androclus*, and it commences thus:

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Assembly-room in Cæsar's Palace.*

Enter CÆSAR, ANDROCLUS, COUNTESS, Guards.

CÆSAR. Hold thy tongue, vile wretch. Let us have no more of this prate;
Or thou wilt fall and win my deadliest hate.

ANDROCLUS. Tyrant, I no more will hold my tongue,
for now
The evil spirit in me is let loose;
Were I to keep it, I should be a
goose.

CÆSAR. Cease, cease, how durst thou?

[*Motions to the Guards.*
Take him away, and in a dungeon
deep
With chains the strongest bound, that
haughty spirit may come round,
And fall down at my feet.

[*Exit ANDROCLUS and Guards.*

BLANCHE. Oh, that I were a man!

"I don't quite know who Blanche is, by-the-way," I observe, as I turn to the next scene. "She does not appear in the *dramatis personæ*; and this is the only line she has to speak."

"Never mind," answers Dick. "The observation is a sound one; and a really fine actress, you know, can do a great deal even with a small part. Is the next scene as good?"

Quite. And in fine contrast. *Androclus* is in his dungeon, and soliloquises:

Ah, well, this is the fate of all who to the tyrant will
not bow,
And how to escape from this I don't know how.

As he speaks, however, he finds a hatchet, which Cæsar, it seems, has left there, and with which *Androclus* cuts his way through the bars of his dungeon-window. But now a terrible alternative is presented to him:

Hark! underneath the dark and slimy water rolls,
Shall I trust to that or walk upon the walls?
Ah, no! I'd rather be caught in the crocodile's
jaws
Than ever again 'neath Cæsar's paws.

And, as he plunges, the guards enter, to lead the escaped captive to execution.

"This portion of the scene," I continue, dropping unconsciously into the familiar critical style, "is very happily and powerfully conceived. The coarse brutality of the first soldier—the rough straightforwardness with which he proclaims that:

We've come to launch thee in that little bark Eternity,
And for thee we have no mite of pity—

contrast finely with the more tigerish playfulness of the second, who mockingly suggests that:

Perhaps the bird hath flown on wings of love,
To the heavens above.

And finer still is the chilling effect upon these lower natures of the silence and darkness, which have only stirred the late captive to yet bolder efforts, as they shout:

Come forth, coward, and let us look upon thy
face,
We want something to cheer us in this awful
place;

and the utter despair which comes upon them as they discover that the bird is, indeed, flown, and rush headlong from the deserted dungeon, exclaiming:

Oh raging now will Cæsar be,
Oh dear-a-me, oh dear-a-me!

"The next act takes us to the forest, where Androclus performs the well-known surgical operation upon the lion, and where the lion himself is shortly after caught by the officers in search of Androclus, and carried off to Cæsar as some compensation for the missing slave. In due course, too, Androclus himself, weary of life now that his only friend has been taken from him, surrenders; and we are thus brought to the last grand scene in the amphitheatre. This occupies the whole of the third act, and, as this act is not only strikingly original, but almost equally brief, we give it—that is to say, Dick, I will read it to you, in extenso:

ACT III.

The Arena. CÆSAR, MANDANE, MEDEA, CELSUS, MALARUS, &c. CÆSAR rings a bell. Enter ANDROCLUS, guarded and in chains.

CÆSAR. Bring forth Androclus. Take off the chains, and give him his dearly-bought liberty. Androclus, thou shalt no longer be a slave.

But freely have that which thou wilt no longer crave.

If thou conquer this forest king

Thy life and liberty it will bring.

What hast thou to say for thyself?

ANDROCLUS. Nothing have I to say, but that I am innocent of that which merits this.

CÆSAR. Haughty, proud, insulting slave, Death awaits thee.

[Rings the bell. The lion comes bounding forth. ANDROCLUS springs forward, calling "Prince, Prince!" The lion lies down and licks his feet.]

ANDROCLUS. Cæsar, this is the only friend I have in the wide world. When he was ill I nursed him, and he doth but prove his gratitude, and unless thou consider to save him with myself, we will die together.

CÆSAR. Androclus, I have wronged thee, but now thou art free,

ANDROCLUS. And no longer shall I thy master be. To be the faithful servant of thy daughter is all I crave.

CÆSAR. So be it. Now for the marriage and the festival.

FINIS."

"Not so good as mine," said Dick, as I laid down the MS. and looked to him for the anticipated applause. "Mine's modern, too; domestic interest, you know, and all that sort of thing. I am not quite sure about the policeman—there's a virtuous policeman, you know, of a Johnsonesque turn of mind, who, when a young woman thanks him for having rescued her from

self-destruction, tells her that it was 'his public duty to act as he did; but that, pleased as he is at all times to perform his public duty, he felt that, on that occasion, he was exercising also a private duty—nay, a deep and lasting feeling of gratitude.' You see, there is a sort of preconceived notion that a policeman ought always to be comic, and— Eh? Quite comic enough, you think, he'd be? Well, perhaps, he might. And now for the rest of the story. I won't read it all, because it's longer than the other; but it opens with a very touching scene between Mr. and Mrs. Glanreth. Mrs. G., you know, has painted a picture, which Mr. G., who is clearly a connoisseur, considers very fine indeed. 'The contour in all the figures,' he tells her, 'is easy, graceful, and flowing; the colouring is vivid, yet most harmonious; and, as a whole, it is indeed beautiful. That female figure, in a posture of devotion, is sublime!' The female party in question turns out to be Mrs. G.'s 'blessed mother;' and this was the modest petition she was uttering:

Gracious heaven,
Grant me the bliss of seeing my dear child
United to a husband whose honour
Is as lofty as his virtue is divine.

Mr. G., who is evidently as discreet in bearing as he is lofty in honour and divine in virtue, interposes here deprecatingly. But Mrs. G. will not have it, insisting that the little request has been 'most righteously fulfilled.' 'And I,' rejoins Mr. G., 'can only say, with bounding heart:

That in such blest fulfilment of her prayer
I've gained an angel of delight and love,
Whose beauty, haloed by the light of virtue,
Makes earth a very paradise to me.

Enter MAID-SERVANT.

MAID. If you please, ma'am, Mr. Muslin, the draper, wishes to speak with you.

You mustn't think that a bathos, you know. Quite the reverse. This Muslin, the draper, is a most desperate fellow—villain of the piece, you know. He's in love with Mrs. G. on the sly, and the whole interest turns upon his profligate pursuit of her. In the first scene, he only shows her some patterns, you know; but at the end of the first act, she calls at his 'emporium' to look at some more, and then the terrible passion of the man's nature comes out. Mrs. G. chooses a dress, and he rapturously tells her that it is 'the very robe of beauty, and will assuredly sit with matchless grace and beauty on her who is the ——' Mrs. G. begs him to 'cease this flattering non-

sense,' or she must instantly leave the place.

MUSLIN. Forgive my excitement, and do not, I humbly pray you, hasten away; I am anxious that these gloves should engage your kind attention. How finely they would fit and grace your lovely hand!

Mrs. G. I cannot allow you to talk so to me in this insulting strain. I will not, sir, indeed.

MUSLIN. You are very beautiful when you are calm; But in a passion you are quite divine; Therefore, let me say, Oh! fairest of the fair,

Hear me, though only for a moment, hear:
If ever beauty could be deemed divine,
And fill man's soul with passion's fire,
That beauty is your own; that soul in-flamed
Is mine.

Mrs. G. Are you drunk, or are you mad?

MUSLIN. I am both mad and drunk with love for you.

The dazzling beauty of your beaming face,
The grace and elegance of your fair form,
Have filled me with such rapture as my bosom

Never knew till this moment as I stand
Enchanted with their heavenly influence.

Still Mrs. G. is proof even against eloquence such as this, and bids him

In the name of decency outraged,
In the name of virtue thus insulted,
Thus justly made to blush,

to get out of the way, and let her depart from the emporium. But the enamoured draper is not to be moved. If the soft wooing of passion will not suffice, sterner measures must be used. 'Deny me!' he cries,

And I will send you through the streets,
A felon, with a rabble at your heels
Yelling their execrations in your ears;
You shall go forth from hence a thief,
Scoffed at by the basest of your sex
Reeling in their drunken revelry around you.

Mrs. G. Oh, hear me!

MUSLIN. I have heard you till I'm sickened with your trash.

* * * * *
Say, dearest, say, is my fond love to meet
A still more fond return?

Mrs. G. Virtue, honour, truth, affection, all in
Combination with my marriage vow
Conspire in urging me with indignation
From my soul to thunder in your ears, No!

MUSLIN. Then meet your doom (*rings the bell*).
Police!

And so the wicked draper, who has compelled his sentimental and tender-conscience but, unfortunately, larcenous shopman to secrete a pair of gloves in Mrs. G.'s muff, hurries her off to the deepest dungeon beneath the—that is to say, to the Marlborough-street station, and there has her promptly committed on a charge of shoplifting. But villany, though successful for a time, is not finally to triumph. Not only is Mr. G. able to retain for his wife the services of a

counsel, who, to use his own glowing words, promises that

I will in all my best exert myself;
All that my skill or judgment can command,
Whatever, with all due propriety,
Can be tho' but remotely brought to bear
Upon your case, shall come with every force!

But it turns out that Mary Mantle and Sally Tape were looking through the door all the time the wicked shopman was about his evil task, and hearing of the trial at the very moment it is in progress at the Central Criminal Court, prevail upon an enthusiastic cabman to drive them thither at top-speed, on the chance of getting paid for his trouble by Mr. G. The result can only be fitly told in the burning words of Mrs. G.'s eloquent counsel. 'Sir,' he says to his grateful client,

I was but an instrument most humble
In the hands of that o'erruling Power
Which ever yet fiercely lashed the guilty,
And threw a shield of tenfold brass before
The innocent.

Mr. G. But all is yet a mystery most profound;
How did the case, which seemed so hopeless once,

Assume so bright a turn at last?
COUNS. O'erwhelmed with doubt and stunned with horror,

I stood upon the gusty shore and saw
Our vessel tossed about on billows,
Roaring, foaming, running mountains high.
But when I stood expecting to behold
Her dashed, with shattering force against
the rock,
And hurled, a wreck, upon the turbid wave—

These two good creatures came

[*Pointing to MARY MANTLE and SALLY TAPE.*

As by the hand of heaven,
To give her power to stem the waves, and steer

Her to a calm and sheltering harbour,
Whose pleasant waters are so sweetly blue,

And do so clearly mirror her fair form.
Yes; they came and gave their crushing evidence.

Then the omnipotence of truth prevailed—
Her power divine struck every soul with awe:

Foul-hearted perjury
Shrank back and stood aghast;
She could not, dared not, meet the withering glance

Of truth. That is the secret of it all.

"And that is all," said Dick, laying down the MS., and hiding his emotion and his features in the soda-water tumbler.

"Quite sure there's not another original anywhere in the parcel?"

"Quite," said Dick. "You see, old What's-his-name told me he had sent back a lot of the biggest rubbish a week or two ago."

"Did he?" said I.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER II. A DEPUTATION.

I WAS a contributor to *The Volcano*, but I did not pen its more frantic and stormy articles. I supplied its poets' corner with verse, and I sought to win general sympathy for the poor and suffering among the working-classes. No doubt certain of my songs had a strong political tendency, were animated by something of a revolutionary spirit; the cause of liberty was dear to me, and I felt keenly the social wrongs under which so many of my fellow-countrymen were labouring. Moreover, I always sought to invest my poetry, if I may so speak of it, with a real human interest: to employ it as a means of expressing genuine feeling, whether of joy, or sorrow, of hope, or of despair. I was anxious that my readers should discover in my lines reflection of their own experiences, albeit cast in a poetic form. But much of what I wrote was prompted by a simple love of nature, and a sense of the beauty of everyday objects—the things that are always with us, but which so often, for that very reason, escape our regard—the wild flowers at our feet, the chequered sunshine, the dancing shadows, the dew-drops on the grass, the blue sky, the silver-bordered rain-clouds, the saffron of dawn, the crimson of sunset.

I do not design, however, to weary the reader with a review of my own lucubrations. I have no overweening sense of my merits as a poet. I am now conscious that my writings were often very imitative, owed almost everything to example. In truth, I may say that I had not studied Wordsworth for nothing. With other young authors I strove to tread in the footprints of the elders, regardless of the fact that their stride was longer, their pace swifter than I could compass. Too often my verses were but as the faint reverberations of grand but distant music—for fine notes of poetry stir echoes in all sorts of unexpected places. I may, I hope, without presumption, claim for myself some measure of literary faculty. And, without doubt, a kind of poetry lies well within the reach of every writer who has acquired skill in the use of language, and can

counterfeit an air of passion. But, of course, there is a vast difference between the verses resulting from genuine inspiration, and the quasi-poetic efforts that are, after all, merely exercises in diction. Occasionally, I am now aware, I was but playing the part of poet, my words were borrowed, my sentiments were simulated, I was impelled by second-hand emotions. I wrote less because my muse insisted peremptorily, than to meet the requirements of the journals, or for the gratification of reading my lines in print; for I assumed that, being printed, they would be read and admired by others. Let it be said for me, however, that I was not at the time conscious of insincerity in the matter.

I even ventured to publish a collection of my verses: Mr. Grisdale lent me valuable aid, and the slim little book was printed at a very moderate expense. It was called *Aspirations*, and contained my best songs. I cannot say that any pecuniary profit resulted from this enterprise. I had, indeed, great difficulty in finding a publisher who would undertake, upon any terms, the production of my book. On all sides I was informed that poetry was "a perfect drug in the market;" that was the unvarying phrase. There were poets, it was urged, at the corner of every street, everywhere, anxious to give away their poems to any who would accept them. In fact, everyone was a poet; it had come to that, and the writers were outnumbering the readers. How could I expect, under such conditions, to obtain special distinction? However, the little work in due season issued from the press. It was rather pinched of look, shabbily bound in thin boards, faintly printed on flimsy paper, its pages denied all extravagance of margin. It was as a pauper child of the muses, not one of those pampered bantlings, princes of the printing-house, who are ushered forth luxurious of type, sumptuous in their purple and gold and fine linen, and altogether superb of aspect. Certainly, the sale was not enormous. The publisher informed me that he had "got rid of"—that was the term he preferred to employ—some two hundred copies, I think. Still the poems found some friends. A few of the songs I set to music with the help of Uncle Junius, and these obtained extensive popularity. And the book did me service—proved to be a sort of admission ticket to the profession of letters. It was not much, perhaps, but still it was something to be known as the author of

Aspirations. I had little difficulty now in obtaining employment as an author. Various magazines were opened to me, and I became a contributor to other journals than *The Volcano*. I was credited with special knowledge in regard to the working-classes of London, their ways and means of life. On that account, I was engaged to write in *The Hourglass*, a Liberal morning newspaper, which was devoting much of its space, just then, to the consideration of social grievances and the labour question. I may mention that some articles I contributed on the suffering condition of the silk-weavers of Spitalfields attracted very general attention. *The Hourglass*, however, professed to hold temperate opinions only; I was forbidden to occupy its columns with any advocacy of the Charter.

The Hon. Pierce Plumer lived in Park-lane. His house was what West-end auctioneers call "a bijou residence." There was very little of it, and it seemed tightly wedged in between two enormous mansions. But it was a pretty house enough, with green verandahs, French windows, pink blinds, flowers in the balcony, and festoons of creeping plants.

I was well acquainted with Mr. Plumer's name. He had bought, as I knew, certain pictures, copies made in the National Gallery, by M. Riel; but, in truth, Mr. Plumer was a renowned personage at the time of which I am writing. He occupied almost a unique position in the political world. Of patrician origin, he affected to represent plebeian interests and opinions. He was a dandy democrat; at once a man of fashion and a prolétaire. It was difficult to believe in his perfect sincerity. But a certain versatility he assuredly should be credited with; he seemed as much at home in the chair of an uproarious Chartist meeting as in an opera-box. He shone no less in the House of Commons than in the betting-ring or the gaming-house. While addicted to all the vices and follies of fashionable society, he professed to sympathise deeply with the virtues and merits of the humbler classes. He contributed with some liberality to the funds collected in support of the Charter; at the same time it was understood that he was responsible for the debts of the Elysian Theatre, of which the popular actress, Madame Vivienne, was the nominal manager.

He had expressed a desire to receive a deputation of working-men touching the Charter, and the grievances it was to redress. He wanted his hands strengthened,

as he said. He should be better qualified to bring the matter before Parliament after having received the information we were qualified to give. At the same time, he was urgent that we should limit the number of the deputation, owing to the small size of his house. "I can't manage to squeeze more than a dozen into my dining-room," he frankly stated.

He was really a good-natured man, I think. He received us with an air of great cordiality, shaking us each by the hand in turn, and declaring that it gave him much pleasure to see us. I was formally introduced as "the author of *Aspirations*." "Oh ah, yes, of course," he said. It was obvious that he had never heard of the production.

He was middle-aged, and perhaps something more, but he assumed an air of youth, was lively of manner and rapid of utterance. It was understood, however, that his locks, as to hue and quantity, were under obligations to art. He was foppishly dressed, with profuse wristbands, a rich roll of velvet collar surmounting his olive-green frock-coat, and a cataraet of black satin stock filling up the opening of his figured silk waistcoat. He was low of stature and dapper of figure. His lavender trousers fitted him very closely indeed, and were tightly strapped under his little lacquered boots. On meeting us he carefully drew off his lemon-tinted gloves, tossing them into his glossy hat, and rubbed his white hands caressingly together, until his turquoise rings clicked together noisily.

"The Charter with its six points," he said, in a light-hearted way; "why not seven? I'm sure I am quite agreeable, and they say there's luck in odd numbers. Well, you know, I'll do the best I can; but it's understood that I reserve to myself liberty of action. I'm not a clock that you can wind up in Spitalfields, and that will strike simply as you bid it in the House of Commons. But I'm with you, I am one of you; don't let there be any mistake about that."

He looked at his watch as he spoke. He was desirous, as I judged, of disposing of the deputation as soon as might be. Two or three of our number—Mr. Grisdale being among them—were certainly anxious to make speeches, had, indeed, brought speeches with them in a bottled-up state, so to speak, and were eager to draw the corks at the first opportunity. But perhaps Mr. Plumer, being a member of the House, had heard as many speeches as he wished to hear, and was too intimate with oratory to have any great respect for it.

"I don't think, you know, we really need have any speechmaking, eh? I understand the matter. You're prepared to go great lengths, any lengths in fact, to obtain what you want. You want people to be quite sure about that, don't you? All the same, you know, you must be careful, in fact, we must all of us be very careful. Now, look here! No collision with the authorities! Not another word about physical force! Meetings?—Yes, by all means, as many as you like and as crowded. Speeches?—Yes; long and strong. Processions?—Without end. Brass bands, banners flying, and loud hurrahs. I've not a word to say against them. Make yourselves heard; let the world know that you're alive and kicking, and very thoroughly in earnest. I would not object to a broken window now and then by way of a change, or even a broken head as a decided protest, upon sufficient provocation being given. But I can't go farther than that. I must really wash my hands of the whole business if you go farther than that." He went through the motions of washing his hands as he spoke; then dropping his colloquial manner, he drew himself up, as though preparing for an oratorical flight. A parliamentary air attended him, he waved his hand aloft, he swayed to and fro, his tones became artificially shrill, he seemed to jerk out his voice as though, like a ball, it must be tossed high to reach a distance. Could it be, I asked myself, that he had ever received lessons in the art of speech from Mr. Toomer Hooton? Certainly there were traces of that elocutionist's manner in Mr. Plumer's delivery of his closing observations. "Gentlemen," he said, "I can make every allowance for reasonable excitement. I am no inattentive observer of current events, and for the cause you have at heart, I have myself perseveringly struggled during many years of my political career. There exists no warmer champion than I am of the rights of labour. I have always advocated the amelioration of society and the emancipation of the sons of toil. I would sow the suffrage broadcast among the people. But I cannot consent to jeopardise a good and just cause by rash conduct, by inflammatory action. In such wise you will but retard the reforms you have at heart. You will hinder the progress of the nation and disappoint and dismay your best friends. No, gentlemen. Do not for one moment imperil the hopes and fair expectations of the people by any foolish

outrage of the law, by any rash conflict with the police. Remember that one false step may seal the fate of millions. But, prudence, caution, and courage, and the day is our own!"

Mr. Plumer waved a scented pocket-handkerchief before him, and then permitted himself to drop into an easy-chair. He seemed conscious of an oratorical triumph of quite a parliamentary character.

"Sherry, James, for these gentlemen," he said to a footman who appeared in the doorway.

It was clear that Mr. Plumer had done with us. The deputation looked a little disconcerted. They had expected that Mr. Plumer would have listened while they discoursed; whereas it was Mr. Plumer who had discoursed, while they had been compelled to listen. There was nothing for it now but to sip the sherry proffered by James, Mr. Plumer's footman, and to depart.

Of course, as a water-drinker upon principle, Mr. Grisdale declined the wine, the while he surveyed, with mingled scorn and curiosity, the livery worn by James. I feared an oratorical outburst. He admitted afterwards that he had been possessed by a strong desire to say a few words upon footmen and their masters, upon calves and plush, and the inner life of the pampered lackey. He contented himself with loudly whispering, "Plumer pretends to be of and for the people; yet he can garb a brother man like that!" I drew him away, to look at a picture of Bacchus and Ariadne, after Titian, that hung opposite the fireplace.

From where we stood we could see a handsome open carriage at Mr. Plumer's door. A lady was reclining gracefully upon its cushions, with a long-eared, blunt-nosed, staring-eyed lapdog beside her. A fringed parasol, of delicate tint, shaded her face. Silk and satin, flowers and lace, jewels, and gold, arrayed her.

"Madame Vivienne," said someone.

Presently she descended from her carriage and entered the house.

"I hope I don't intrude?" she said with a merry laugh, as she appeared in the dining-room, confronting Mr. Plumer and the deputation. "Pray don't let me disturb you, gentlemen. But a lady is allowed to be impatient, and I really couldn't wait any longer at the door; the sun was quite spoiling my complexion."

She was very handsome, with brilliant hazel eyes, well-defined brows, very white even teeth, and red lips which, if rather on a large scale, were perfect in form. Her

voice was delightfully musical, with a sort of jocund trill about it that was most pleasant to hear. There was a sort of theatrical accent about her manner; but she seemed naturally vivacious and mirthful. I judged her to be a trifle older than she desired to be thought, or, indeed, than she looked when viewed, as I had sometimes viewed her, from the pit of the little Elysian Theatre. She was English-born, as I understood, but was the wife or widow of the foreigner whose name she bore.

"It's a deputation I'm receiving," Mr. Plumer began, with rather a confused air and even, I think, a faint blush upon his cheeks.

"Surely," she said, with a gracious smile and a wave of her hand, as though to show how perfectly her primrose gloves fitted. "Very happy to see the gentlemen. They won't mind about the informality of the introduction. Some of them know me already, I'm thinking. This young gentleman, for instance." And she turned suddenly to me. I was made aware that I had been staring at her rather rudely.

"This is Mr.—Mr.—— I forget the name," said Mr. Plumer, confusedly. "Author of—of—— I beg your pardon; my memory is sadly treacherous."

"Aspirations," someone prompted.

"Aspirations, of course."

"Indeed! It treats of the use and abuse of the letter H, I suppose," said the lady, smiling. "A useful work, I don't doubt; and it ought to have a large public, I'm very sure. I'll take care and recommend it to my friends."

"It's a volume of poems," I ventured to explain.

"Of course it is. What was I thinking about? I have heard of the book. I saw it reviewed in *The Sunday Gazette*, and they quoted one or two things from it, that I thought were decidedly pretty."

The deputation, wearing rather a baffled and perplexed look, was gradually withdrawing.

"If any of the gentlemen would like an order for the Elysian for any night in the week, they've only to mention it," said Madame Vivienne.

"It's time I went home to my tea," Mr. Gridale whispered to me rather grimly. "I thought we were here upon rather serious business; but, I suppose, Plumer thinks

we ought to conclude, as they do at the theatre, with a laughable farce. A patriot! Theman's a mere play-actor! Come away."

Madame Vivienne touched me lightly on the arm.

"You look clever, young gentleman: and your book shows a pretty sort of talent for verse-making. Why not write for the stage? You've never given it a thought? What does that matter? It's easy enough. No sort of invention is required—we borrow all that, as you know—only a trifle of tact and ingenuity." As she spoke she drew from her pocket a crumpled little book with a paper cover. "Now, look at this; here's a French trifle in one act. Try and turn it into tidy English, will you? And throw in a few jokes for Collarby, my low comedian, will you? You know the sort of fun that Collarby likes. If you could manage a song for me it would be all the better. I shall play Suzanne; but, of course, you will call her Susan in the English version. Something arch, and gay, and bright, you know. When shall I hear from you? Send the thing to the theatre when you've finished it. The sooner the better. Or, bring it to the theatre yourself. Send in your name, insist upon seeing me, and don't go away until you have seen me. That's the only way at the Elysian. Now, good-bye; God bless you!"

I left her, with the sounds of her merry, melodious voice trilling in my ear, and with the little French play grasped in my hand.

It was entitled, *L'Oncle de ma Tante*.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER II. TRIFLE.

THE great prima donna, on hearing her own name mentioned, sent a far-reaching glance from end to end of the long table. She knew, no doubt from experience, the power of her name even in remote village inns; there were brigands and robbers in the world, who would have let her go for no ransom but a song. But her long glance came back to her disappointed. The representatives of the people of Laxton did not spring to their feet en masse, leap on the forms and the table, wave their hats and cheer. They sat and stared at her, and some buried their faces in the pewter—drinking doubtfully to their own healths, but certainly not in her honour. For all the emotion they showed, they might just as well have never heard even the name of Mademoiselle Clari. And, after all, that was not impossible. Had she been Lady Quorne, that would have been a different thing.

Why should she, who had received the applause of millions and the homage of princes, look disappointed, even for a moment, because the announcement of her name had fallen flat on the cobblers and carpenters of a little out-of-the-way village like Laxton? And yet, with all her self-possession, so obvious was the momentary disappointment that Walter Gordon observed it—it is true his eyes were quick, but he was certainly not looking for it, and looks that are seen when not looked for must be very plain indeed; people mostly

see what they expect to see. He even caught the least little motion of her shoulders—the faintest suggestion of a shrug—as she turned her eyes largely upon him once more, and said:

"You see, monsieur, that I am not so known like you say."

"That is precisely what the sun said, mademoiselle, when he once found himself among the moles."

"The moles?"

"Yes—very honest little creatures, but not famous for seeing beyond their day's labour. But because they don't see him, it is not less true that the whole world knows the sun."

"But all the same, the moles are of the world."

"Then they are more than Laxton is, mademoiselle."

"Laxton?"

She had a trick, he noticed, of repeating a word in the form of a question, drawing her brows a little closer together at the same time. He had often noticed that the most eloquent eyes go with slow minds.

"This is Laxton, mademoiselle."

"Oh, the place? I never heard of him."

"Then Laxton is like you, you see—not so well known as it believes. Only there is just all the difference between the mole not being known to the sun, and the sun not being known to the mole."

Walter Gordon was still as bewildered, at least so far as any adventures can bewilder the adventurous, at finding the famous prima donna in the parlour of The Five Adzes; but he did not choose to show his wonder, and was enjoying the yet greater bewilderment of the good people, who must, he judged, be finding themselves so strangely at sea on their own floor. He

knew that he was talking nonsense, and was inventing some new compliment wherewith to impress the signora, when the foreigner who had been sent to fetch him from the chimney again bustled into the room.

"Mademoiselle," he burst out in French, "this is Despair!"

"Despair?"

"The depth! I have torn my hair—see—but it is no use; none at all. It is a Gig, mademoiselle—and a Deluge!"

"A gig—and a deluge?"

"Yes, mademoiselle—yes, a thousand times."

"What is it you call a gig, Prosper?"

"A gig? It is Despair! It is a thing where you would get wet to the skin. It is Death, mademoiselle. That is a gig—Death; Despair."

"Then what is to be done?"

"Nothing—nothing but to wait; to wait in a place where there is nothing to eat, great Heaven, but bacon, and where it rains for ever."

Walter Gordon observed the Frenchman more closely. He was a large, portly man, who should, by right of age as well as of temperament, have been calm and stolid, and whose tragedy was therefore not unmingled with comedy. He gesticulated little, but there was an intensity and force of passion about him, that made one feel that in every future lexicon the word Gig must henceforth be substituted for Despair. Walter looked for a moment at Mademoiselle Clari to catch from her eyes any sympathy upon the point of humour; but they showed no trace of a smile. Either she was used to Monsieur Prosper, or else the situation was a genuine tragedy.

At last she said, very seriously, and after the fullest reflection:

"I think I should like to drive in a gig, Prosper."

"Great Heaven! Are you quite mad, mademoiselle?"

"Would one get so very wet, Prosper?"

"Oh no, mademoiselle. You would only be drowned."

"And suppose that I like to be drowned?"

"Great Heaven!"

Meanwhile Walter Gordon caught a look of bewilderment on another face—the most utterly complete he had ever seen. The Five Adzes had a landlord, and he was in the doorway. He had responsibilities that prevented his taking

refuge, like his habitual guests, in the passive comfort of a stare. All he could do was to scratch his ear.

Since Walter was a painter as well as observer, he could not have had a better study of three contrasted faces made to hand. There was tragic volubility in Monsieur Prosper's, stolid bewilderment represented by the landlord's, and in Mademoiselle Clari's a calm and reflective self-will, no less exaggerated in its way. She looked as if, having a caprice for being drowned, nothing would move her. And, certainly, a drive in an open gig in such a downpour would not leave her far short of drowning.

"When shall you learn," she asked quietly of Prosper, "to ask me what I choose to do? Suppose the gig pleases me—what then?"

Walter was at that moment making a sketch of the landlord's face on his mental thumbnail, and he caught his eye.

"Can I be of any use?" he asked, including the landlord and Mademoiselle Clari.

"Yes, sir, you might, if e'er a man could understand their lingo. As for I, I can't made head—no, nor tail. What for a man should go out of his seven wits at sight of a trap, beats me—less it's French ways, as it may be, I never saw such folk since I was born."

"Please to have the gig to the door," said Mademoiselle Clari, calmly.

"I'm afraid Monsieur Prosper is right," said Walter. "Your voice must not be drowned, mademoiselle."

"Ah—then the rest of me is of no matter. Very well. Monsieur," she said suddenly to the under-gamekeeper, "go you and bring the gig for me."

The gracious sweetness of look and manner that she threw into her address, the sudden turn from stony obstinacy to the most winning courtesy, were not lost on Walter Gordon, however it might be with the gamekeeper. Had he been a prince whom she wished to bring to her feet, she could do no more. It was the first time he had seen the exercise of intentional fascination—and to be wasted on a Laxton peasant for a trifle! He was growing interested; she was becoming something of a riddle to him, independently of her presence at The Five Adzes.

All the world knew all about Mademoiselle Clari, and Walter Gordon shared in the common knowledge. It is true that

while everybody knew everything about her, nobody knew precisely the same. And Walter Gordon's share in the common knowledge meant the knowledge of a good many stories, less consistent than perfectly authentic—that they all were.

There is generally something mysterious about the advent of a *prima donna*. There are many people who, in their hearts, believe that the race has no origin, but simply appears. The world used to be content with what it had, and cared not to pierce the bellows to discover whence the wind blew. But we have changed all that. We care less about how a singer sings than whence she gets her diamonds; and less even about that delicate subject than her birthplace and her pedigree. And the result of our enquiries is rather to confirm the view, that a *prima donna* comes from nowhere.

Clari, for instance, had an Italian name; but, as all the world now knows, an Italian name seldom denotes an Italian. There were people who said she was in point of fact an American—a Miss Clare, from Brooklyn; and this they had on the best authority. That she was French, was a common belief; she was related to Monsieur Prosper, her half-master, half-teacher, half-courier, half-impresario, half-secretary, as niece, daughter, wife, or whatever other relation happened to be on the best authority for the time. And certainly she spoke French, far more fluently than she spoke American. That she had never yet been in the United States was proof positive with some that she was, with others that she was not, a citizen of one of them; that she had constantly sung in France was positive proof with some that she was not, with others that she was, a Frenchwoman. But the best belief, and among the minority of really well-informed people, was that she was born in Madrid, or Seville, or Barcelona, or "one of those places;" at any rate in Spain. Clari was an adaptation of her christian-name—Clara. She certainly had features of the Spanish type, she affected the Spanish costume, and she might be able to talk Spanish, as well as she talked French, Italian, or English, for anything that anybody knew to the contrary. A very little Spanish, as a rule, goes nearly as long a way as a very little Italian. She was undoubtedly a good linguist; good enough to be a Russian, or a cosmopolitan. The only nationality, in short, which was never laid to her, was

the German; and if she was never called Hungarian, it was probably because it never occurs to people to think much of Hungary in such matters.

On the score of her race or native land, she herself was as reticent as becomes a *prima donna*. A *prima donna* is, perhaps, unique among women in never talking about her aunts or uncles, or saying, "when I was a girl." And she had that peculiar, but unpatriotic habit, not uncommon among queens of song, of letting the audiences that like "native talent" claim her for a compatriot, and those that like foreign artists count her as a foreigner. In France, she never protested that she was not a Frenchwoman; but in England, she never so much as hinted that she might be an Englishwoman—a British Miss Clare. Such a suspicion would have been mischief; and a paragraph to that effect maliciously inserted in some newspaper gossip was at once suppressed and contradicted.

But, on the whole, and for all practical purposes, whether Miss Clare, or Mademoiselle Prosper, or Senorita Clara, she was an Italian singer—and might, therefore, just possibly have come from Italy after all.

Then—was she married? And if so, how often? And if not, ought she to be? It did not follow that, because the bills called her mademoiselle, she was not madame. The personnel of her calling is a mass and a maze of contradictions; all that seems, is not; all that is not, seems. Singers' husbands are as obscurely mysterious a race as singers' fathers—more so, indeed, unless they are made prominent by special scandal. And, as yet, no scandal had ever brought to light any possible husband of Mademoiselle Clari.

On the contrary, whatever she was, whoever she was, she was one of those happy women, well-nigh miraculously happy for one on her pedestal, from whom scandal rolls off without harm or stain. It was strange; for she had not the air of an artistic puritan. Miss Hayward was not the only person who had been unpleasantly struck by the contrast between her deep brown eyes and her golden glory of hair. Then she was eccentric, beyond all question; and eccentricity, in most cases, is the certain path to an ill-name. There were all sorts of anecdotes current and afloat about her caprices, her restlessness, her avarice, her prodigality, her generosity,

her vindictiveness, her charity; but about the propriety of her conduct, not one. The most ill-natured could only say of her, that she was cold-natured, and was, therefore, not exposed to the ordinary temptations. And, in truth, with all her undeniable fascination, nobody had ever been able to make love to Mademoiselle Clari. Those who had tried, invariably found her, not only cold, but stupid—at least, they thought so. Nor had anybody ever found her particularly gifted with brains.

As to her age—but that nobody even pretended to know, beyond the certainty that she was not less than twenty, and the probability that she was not over forty.

Such was Mademoiselle Clari, as Walter Gordon knew of her. He had heard her sing, and, to say the truth, she had interested him singularly little. Many people raved of her; but he was not one of her admirers. For his taste, her popularity was a fatal flaw in her. He “schwärmte,” as they used to say at Lindenheim in the old student days, for all whom the general voice condemned; in these days he would have thrown in his musical lot with the disciples of the future—until the future came; and then he would have been its enemy. He could no more profess admiration for a popular singer than for a popular composer; he had long ago made up his mind, that majorities are necessarily composed of fools. So it had been at Lindenheim, so it was now, and so it would be always and everywhere; for the devotion to minorities comes of inborn instinct, and can never be conquered by reason. And so he had always been in the habit of turning up his nose at the name of Mademoiselle Clari.

But now, though he had seen her close, and did not admire her the more, and though he had exchanged a few stupidities with her in the way of conversation, and though her behaviour by no means attracted him, still he felt himself within that circle of personal fascination, magnetism, whatever the name of the thing may be, that is more than half the secret of song. He felt sure that she was neither amiable nor wise; but he knew he should never think of her without interest again.

And at the same time, he had to himself been regarding her first as an adventure, and then as a comedy. Her frank disappointment at finding herself unknown in Laxton, the missing one little useless leaf

from her laurel crown, delighted a student of his fellow-creatures. The episode of the gig was beyond him; but, meanwhile, it gave him an opportunity of watching the effect of her fascination on the gamekeeper. Was she trying experiments too?

It was not likely that even an electric spark would fly fast at Laxton. But then speed is comparative.

The effect was as simple as possible. The under-gamekeeper rose, stepped over the form, put on his cap, and went out into the rain. Mademoiselle Clari, as it were, folded up her sweet graciousness again, and put it away for next time. She looked neither at Prosper nor at Walter, but fanned herself abstractedly. Prosper paced up and down the parlour in a fume; but he did nothing to stop the gamekeeper. And, if the latter was really influenced by chivalry, interference would not have been wise, for he was a strapping fellow, and tall of his hands.

But Walter did not feel inclined to submit to airs, simply because he had in effect said no more than that it was a wet evening. So he repeated his offence, purposely, by way of an experiment in his turn.

“You will get very wet, mademoiselle, without shelter or cover.”

“I do not like being always the same.”

“But you will catch cold.”

“Not if I am drowned.”

“And will drive? There is only room for two. Have you far to go, mademoiselle?”

“Far to go? Ah, here is the gig. Good-night, Prosper.”

“Mademoiselle!”

“I beg your pardon,” said the landlord, addressing Walter, “you’ve had my gig round, and welcome, but I don’t know you from my own mother, and if the two of you takes a horse and a gig, who’s to bring it home again? That’s what puzzles me. You may be going to drive to Lingo, for all I don’t know.”

“Have you a man to drive? No?”

“Oh, I can drive my own self, if it comes to that. I’ve had a wetting afore now, and I’ll have many a more I trust afore I die, else I shan’t live long. But my gig aren’t made for three, and we’re none of us such little ‘uns.”

“You will drive your own self? Ah, but I want you to drive Prosper. I shall stay. It is too wet for a dog. Ah, Prosper, my friend, you will be wet indeed,” she said to him in French, with a tender

regret. "But then I have a throat, you see, and you have none."

"Great Heaven, mademoiselle! No throat? No, but I have lungs, mademoiselle, and a skin. You say yourself it is not fit for a dog, mademoiselle."

"Are you a dog, my friend? Go; one of us must get wet. Would you like it to be me?"

"Mademoiselle, you speak English. Bid them bring me some paper and some ink and a pen."

"A pen?"

"Yes. I shall compose my epitaph, and make my will."

"And what will you leave me?"

"I shall leave you—to regret, mademoiselle."

"Ah?"

"And for my epitaph, that shall be——"

"I will write your epitaph, Prosper. There—you see I save you all the trouble. Do you hear me, monsieur? When shall you learn to do what I say? Ah, how it rains!"

And certainly there must have been some strong reason for turning out Monsieur Prosper with what was beginning to look like wanton cruelty—some stronger reason still for his making unwilling preparation to obey. The rain was pouring down in floods and torrents, so that even the seasoned labourers of Laxton were delaying the need of going home.

Why had the gamekeeper gone at once for the gig? Why had not the landlord of The Five Adzes objected altogether to the proceeding, and refused to let out his horse and himself to a strange Frenchman for an unexplained journey, on a night when no sane man would wish to be out of doors, even for pay? Why did Prosper, with all a Frenchman's horror of water-drops and his care for his own comfort, submit to what seemed no matter of absolute necessity?

Walter asked himself all these questions, and could find but one answer. It was not fascination, it was not magnetism; it was just Mademoiselle Clari. He began to understand what made her such a queen of song. He was beginning to dislike her practically instead of only in theory; and yet he hoped that she was not going to ask him also to do anything very absurd.

It took Monsieur Prosper a long time to prepare. Facing the rain seemed to require as much anxious arming as if he were going out to battle. At last, when he was complete, he must have struck the

people of Laxton with awe, for he stood before them thrice his former size, in a huge Russian cloak of fur that covered his head and hat with a hood, fell over his finger-tips, and reached down to his heels. It was to be hoped that the gig from The Five Adzes was tolerably roomy, or it would be worse for the driver.

Presently the gig went splashing off. Clari kept her seat at the deal table, fanning herself, and drinking sugar and water. She did not seem in the least disposed to move, and her presence appeared to keep anybody else from moving. And yet Walter felt that all remained there by her will, and that if she had willed them all to go, they would have gone.

What was her next caprice to be?

"This is new to me," she said presently to Walter, who was sitting just outside the chimney-corner. "What do you do when I am not here? I want to see. What do you do?" she asked, turning suddenly to the gamekeeper.

"Well, miss, I don't know as we do so much. We just sits a bit, and takes our beer——"

"And sing, too," said Walter.

"You sing? Ah, that is what I want to hear. We will do what you always do. You shall have your beer, and you shall sing. I can drink out of pewter too. Ah! this is good—and hark to the rain! Sing—you!" she said to the gamekeeper.

He looked round at his friends a little feebly, coloured, and smiled bashfully. Clari watched him gravely over the edge of her fan, which hid all her face below the eyes.

Walter felt a greater dislike to her than ever. Was she so bent on conquest that she could not let a peasant alone, but must needs flirt with a servant if his master were not by? As for Walter himself, she seemed to ignore him—whether that increased or lessened his growing dislike I know not. Nevertheless, he remained. She had not willed that he should go.

It must have been a bad moment for the gamekeeper. He found courage neither in his own heart, nor in the faces of his friends.

"Very well," said Clari; "I wanted to hear, that's all."

All—and enough.

"Great Job, the god o' thunder,
And March, the god o' war——"

But, when the end of the first of the interminable verses was reached, Clari rose and

swept out of the room with a proud smile, half of which at least she gave to Walter. It seemed to say :

"You see I can conquer little worlds as well as large!"

PLAYING FOR LOVE.

A STORY.

THEY tell me that nowadays, when a vessel arrives at Melbourne, the pilot comes off to her outside the harbour. If so, I congratulate the adult colony of Victoria upon, at all events, one very decided improvement upon the somewhat eccentric arrangements adopted by the juvenile colony of Port Phillip some time ago. When I arrived there in the year 1851, in the good ship *Anonymous*, the fashion was for the pilot to wait till the danger was passed, and then come quietly on board inside the bar, and entertain you, on the way up to the mouth of the Yarra Yarra, with playful chaff upon the narrowness of your escape from laying your bones upon it. In case there should be any among my readers who may not yet have made a "personally-conducted" to Australia, and may thus miss the cream of this exquisite practical jest, I may mention that the harbour of Victoria is a little inland sea of I forget how many hundred square miles in extent, with just one exceedingly narrow entrance. It is in fact something like a very huge bottle with a very tiny neck; or, to be more dignified, like a miniature Mediterranean with a proportionate Gut of Gibraltar.

Now this is all very well with the Mediterranean, which is an easy-going classical old sea, ready enough to rage upon adequate occasions, but far too blasé for the unexciting exertion of a daily tide. But Port Phillip is in its juvenile stage—that stage when it is a physical necessity to be "doing something," if it be only the truly diabolical occupation of going to and fro and walking up and down. So Port Phillip, of course, indulges in a tide, and as this tide has no other means of getting in and out of the big bottle except through the little neck, you may readily obtain, by the simple means of filling a bottle with water and turning it topsy-turvy, a fairly suggestive idea of the way in which it conducts itself on the passage. To make things better, about half the channel is barred by a submerged reef.

I will do the third mate of the *Anonymous* the justice to believe that he was

not aware of the ingenious regulation above referred to, by which it was ordained that a vessel should in all cases run the gauntlet of this pleasant passage, before presuming to demand the services of a pilot. Indeed there was no particular reason why the third mate should have known anything about it. It was only his second voyage at sea, and the first had been to Callao and back. You will say perhaps that, under those circumstances, there was no particular reason why the charge of the good ship *Anonymous* should have been left to the third mate. And perhaps there was not. Only with the second mate deserted in Port Cooper, the mate with his skull split fairly open twelve hours ago by the fall of a heavy block, and the skipper what a figuratively-disposed Yankee on board called "sopping drunk" in his cabin, it was not so easy to say on whom else that duty should devolve. And on the whole, perhaps, as a practical seaman without the slightest knowledge of his whereabouts except such as might be gleaned from a chart carefully locked up in some unknown drawer in the captain's cabin, he no doubt acted for the best in not attempting to run his ship's nose into such a very uninviting-looking trap as Port Phillip Heads without assistance, and accordingly in heaving her to and signalling vehemently for assistance.

He was wrong, no doubt, in swearing so freely as he did, when, instead of sending us a pilot, the lighthouse people replied by signalling in their turn with equal emphasis, but, to us, in a perfectly unknown tongue, to the effect that until we should have got over our difficulties no assistance could be given. But I am bound to admit, both that the circumstances offered some temptation to such a course, and that a large majority both of crew and passengers joined very heartily in the performance. Meanwhile the good ship *Anonymous* drifted slowly, but very surely, towards her doom. There was a strongish breeze blowing straight into the harbour, and as luck would have it, a strongish tide still setting straight out of it. As we neared the bar we felt the influence of the latter more strongly, and hung, like Mahomet's coffin, between wind and tide. Only that with Mahomet's coffin, wind and tide, or what answers to them, appear to be fixed quantities, whereas in our case the tide, as we afterwards discovered, would slacken and turn in about another hour, and then—

At length, just as the "then" was getting painfully imminent, a small boat was seen struggling towards us. Fortunately the wind had comparatively but little effect on her low hull, while the full force of the tide swept her towards us, or the one man who rowed and the one boy who steered her would have had but a slender chance. As it was she just lived to get alongside three parts full of water, and sank from under their feet, as they scrambled out of her into our mizen-chains.

"What the ——" began our irate young acting-commander, more savage at the delay than grateful for the help that had come at last. But the man cut him short.

"Is she quick in stays?" he asked briskly and imperatively, altogether disregarding not only the mate's angry greeting but the chorus of objurgation from the forty or fifty passengers around.

"No," he replied sullenly, "d——d slow."

The man struck his hand impatiently upon his thigh, and a look came into his face, before which the chorus of objurgation somehow died away suddenly into silence. The stranger gave one quick glance aloft, another to leeward, where the boiling surge seemed to thunder over the reef almost close under our beam, then spoke again briskly and imperatively as before.

"Then fill and wear round," he said. "There's no help for it. And bear a hand every soul of you, for it's touch and go."

And touch and go it was. The men worked as I never saw them work before, and have but rarely seen others work since. Every passenger, too, lent a hand at some easily recognised brace or sheet. The main-yards swung round. The ship gathered way, paid off, rushed for a few seconds headforemost towards the reef, came slowly up on the other tack, and then jammed hard upon the wind, with every stitch set under which she could stagger, laboured, with straining rigging and bending masts, to fight her way back to the entrance, past which she had drifted in her ignorance half an hour ago.

For ten minutes or so, the excitement of that race for life was as intense as any of which I have as yet had experience. They say we touched the corner of the reef, and the two men at the wheel were certain that they felt the rudder bump as she swept by. I know the spray from the breakers fell in clouds upon the deck, when, just as the two topgallant-masts

went with a crash over the side under the pressure of a stronger puff than usual, the face of the stranger expanded into a smile, and opening his close-shut lips, he sang out briskly once more:

"Up helm! Round in your weather-braces. Square away, Mr. What's-your-name, and never mind the wreck."

And so the danger was passed, and with a ringing cheer we dashed gaily into the smooth water of the inner bay.

The breeze still held, and in very few more hours we were up at the anchorage. Half an hour more, and the anchor was down; the sails, what were left of them, had been furled and stowed somehow, and the ship's boats hoisted out, without much need of or regard for the orders of the unlucky young third mate, who, it must be confessed, took very good-humouredly the plentiful chaff which rewarded his well-meant but perfectly futile attempts at enforcing something like discipline. Equally futile were the remonstrances of the passengers, who soon discovered that the ship's boats would only accommodate the ship's crew, and that, on this occasion, at all events, they were not by any means intended to accommodate anyone else. And as the passengers were a little more numerous than the mate, it seemed at first as though there were likely to be "a row."

Our friendly pilot, however—he was not a pilot at all, by-the-way, but the master of a small coasting schooner, doing a fine trade in these golden days between Melbourne and Twofold Bay—pointed out to us that, even if we conquered our point, only one batch of us could be landed in the boats, and that only on Liardet's Beach, whilst if we waited quietly for the steamer which was sure to be alongside soon, a sovereign or so apiece would take us all right up to the town. So we gave the crew a parting benediction, received an equally hearty compliment in return, and awaited the steamer with what philosophy we might. In another hour she was alongside, and we too departed, leaving the captain in peaceful possession of his ship, through which his snoring now resounded in uninterrupted melody. By-and-by, no doubt, he also awoke; realised—perhaps, with a little difficulty—the condition of affairs, and hailing the steamer in his turn, was, "as in duty bound, the last to leave his ship." I can't speak from personal knowledge, and he may have jumped, or tumbled, overboard. All I know is, that when, at the cost of a ten-pound note, we

got a boat next day to go off from Liardet's Beach for our effects, we found the dead chief mate "in sole charge."

You may suppose that the interval between our passage of the famous bar, and the little discussion that followed touching the movements of the crew, had not passed without some attempt on our part to signify our gratitude to our rescuers. Two meetings had been held, one in the cuddy, one in the steerage, and a nice little purse of some fifty sovereigns had been made up and duly handed to the elder of the two, with a complimentary speech on the quarter-deck. For himself, however, he had declined it.

"Thank you kindly, gentlemen," he said, "all the same. I'm making money pretty fast, and shall get a good price for this job out of the agents. So, if you'll allow me, I'll just hand it over to the lad. I couldn't have got off without him."

The boy coloured crimson through the tan which browned his honest open face, and his blue eyes sparkled with delight.

"Thanking you kindly, gentlemen, I'm sure;" and he took off his cap and ruffled up his crisp brown curls in a desperate attempt at stimulating adequate utterance. "I'm—I'm heartily obliged, gentlemen—and—to you too, sir, I'm sure—and—and—I ain't noways good at talking, gentlemen—but—I do thank you—hearty."

And as the young fellow turned away, it rather seemed to me as though he dashed a brown hand across the bright blue eyes a little suspiciously.

"What shall you do with it all, my lad?" I asked presently, as we were leaning side by side over the taffrail waiting for the steamer.

The boy coloured again, and the honest blue eyes lighted up.

"Send it to my sister, sir," he answered. "The old man's in trouble just now with losses, and one thing and another, and I've saved up five-and-twenty pound already. There's a mail goes out to-morrow, and—there she is, sir—there comes the steamer. I wonder if there'll be a letter in town from Sis."

By nightfall I was lodged, not very sumptuously as regards accommodation, but royally enough in respect of cost, at The Prince of Wales, and young Harry Godwin had left me to go up to the post-office in search of a possible letter, promising to look me up the next day before going on board again, and tell me all the

news. For Master Harry had interested me, and I really wanted to know how "the old man" was getting on, and whether the prospect was in any way brightening of that future union between pretty Sis, working hard to keep a roof over his head in the little Kentish village seventeen thousand miles away, and honest Dick Golding, toiling away night and day up to his waist in water at Welcher's River, forty miles beyond Ballarat.

Meanwhile, a less romantic, but more practical and pressing consideration, was—dinner; and that discussed, I strolled out for a moonlight look at Canvas Town. I have a curious faculty, not merely for finding my way generally, but for finding it, in the case of any new or unexplored locality, straight to what will be for me the most interesting spot in it. In the present instance, my accommodating instinct conducted me direct to the establishment of Mr. Hermann Rauch.

From an architectural point of view, Mr. Hermann Rauch's establishment could hardly, perhaps, be considered a success. The building, which was about fifty feet long by twenty wide, stood endwise to the street, if street it could be called, which street was none, but only an irregular chasm, of varying width and uncertain direction, between two rows of tents and shanties. Its original design had evidently been that of a frame-house, with planked walls, glazed windows, and asphalted roof. And, so far as concerned a considerable portion of the principal front, this design had been carried into execution. The door stood, of course, in the centre, with a window, or a place for one, on either side. Of these windows, the one on the side nearest the town was complete—all but the glass—the wall through which it was pierced being also fairly finished in stout deal planks, all but a space of some four feet square in the top corner, which I at first took to be occupied by a sign, but found, on examination, to be filled in, for lack of boards, with some half-dozen gaily-painted teatrays. On the other side of the door the planking ceased a little more than half-way up the window; the remaining portion of the façade being eked out with a huge tarpauling. To a fanciful mind—a little, perhaps, under the influence of its surroundings—the house had a look of having been fighting, and of having come off with a gigantic black eye.

However, the framework of that por-

tion of the building was perfect enough, and for at least a couple of yards back the roof also possessed a fair semblance of the original design, and was duly covered with asphalted felt, neatly nailed down. Then, suddenly, the felt also gave place to tarpauling; which again, in its turn, was replaced by a heterogeneous collection of old sails, reef-points, bolt-ropes, and all, just as they had been cut away from the yards—and with every here and there an irregular opening, hastily slit with a knife, to let out the smoke and foul air. Apparently, even this material had run rather short after a time, for the roof, which at the street-end must have been quite eighteen feet in height, made a sudden dip about twenty feet back, and from thence continued its downward course till, at the far end, the ridge-pole was within easy reach of my umbrella. Mr. Rauch, who was a philosopher, thought this a decided artistic advantage. It helped the “bersh-bectiff,” he said, and made the building look longer.

It was the sound of music which first attracted me to the place; and, on entering, I found a flute, a harp, and a cornet-à-piston in full blast. I don't think they were all playing quite the same tune; indeed, the cornet, who of course had it all his own way, and who had evidently absorbed quite as many “nobbles” as were good for him, was himself a little uncertain as to both air and key, and, even as I entered, glided from one tune into another, with a rapidity which must a little have disconcerted his accompanists. That, however, was a minor matter. Outside the building the more penetrating tones of the instruments had made themselves heard sharply enough. Within the babel of sounds, the clamour of a hundred voices, the click of tin pannikins and pewter-pots, the shouts for beer and brandy and “sham,” the rattle of dice, the banging of rough deal tables with heavy fists, and the stamping of huge hob-nailed boots on the loosely-boarded floor, made up among them a volume of noise which, for the most part, fairly dominated the musical portion of the entertainment, and left the performers free to follow their own sweet will in the matter either of time or tune.

Round this pandemonium I had been “loafing” quietly for half an hour or so, taking an occasional nobbler for the benefit of the house, and losing or winning a half-crown or so here and there, just to

avoid singularity, when my attention was arrested by a sight which, at the moment, it grieved me not a little to see.

I am not strait-laced in the matter of gambling, which, I frankly confess, has always appeared to me at least as innocent a means of losing—or, for the matter of that, of gaining—money as a good many others on which the Mrs. Grundy of the period looks with anything but disfavour. But I was sorry to see young Harry Godwin here.

There was something in the boy's face, too, which only too quickly assured me that he was not at Mr. Hermann Rauch's establishment in any character of mere visitor like myself. It was an honest open face enough still; but it had lost the merry, careless look which I had never yet seen absent from it, even when the labouring ship was closest on the breakers, and any moment might find us struggling for our lives in a whirlpool that would drown a whale. Now, it had a heavy, anxious, and, at the same time, eager look—the look I have seen so often since, and had even then seen more than once, as the face of some young beginner at the deadly table.

This, then, was the end of all his good resolutions of the evening; this was to be the fate of the money which he had earned so gallantly, and which was to have been sent off by to-morrow's mail, to help the struggling father and good, hard-working sister at home. It was no business of mine, of course, and in such an atmosphere as that of a gold colony who could expect a lad like that to steer clear of all the thousand temptations around him, and with his pockets full of money too? If he were not here, he would very likely be doing worse. And yet I couldn't help being sorry for it—so sorry that I was on the point of making my way to his side, and trying if I could not rescue poor pretty Sis's fifty pounds for that night, at all events, when the opportunity passed. The boy, who had been hurrying about from table to table, looking now at *monté*, now at *euchre*, now at *cribbage*, but not venturing to try his luck at games of which, as I afterwards found, he knew absolutely nothing, had at length arrived at one where the play was confined to simple betting upon the dice, and from which a man was just rising with a goodly spoil. The boy hesitated a moment, then set his teeth close, and sat down on the vacant cask. Before I could make my way to the table he had already won twice,

and the blue eyes were beginning to sparkle. Then I knew that I was too late, and that the fever-fit must run its course.

Poor Harry! It did not take long. For about half an hour he held out, now winning a trifle, now losing a trifle more. Gradually the little pile of sovereigns diminished in bulk, then vanished altogether, and Harry Godwin's last stake lay on the beer-stained table. The great shag-bearded digger with whom he was playing gave a huge horse-laugh, and rattled the dice-box triumphantly over his head.

"Last chuck, mate?" he roared pleasantly. "Ha! ha! here goes. Sixes again, by the living Jingo! Cleaned out, my lad, eh? Ha! ha! ha!" And the jovial winner swept poor Harry's last sovereign into his well-filled leathern purse, and shouted aloud, like an amiable Goliath, for a new antagonist.

The boy sat quite quiet for a moment or two, looking with vacant eyes at the place where his money had lain, then, without a word, he flung his arms upon the table, dropped his head upon them, and burst into a passion of tears.

"Hallo, mate!" roared the merry giant opposite, half-amused, half-disgusted, at this very unorthodox procedure; "that last shot started a water-butt, eh?"

There was a laugh among the bystanders, and a dozen or two of disengaged players came crowding round, with a plentiful supply of jeering chaff for the poor-spirited creature, who couldn't lose his money without crying over it like a great child.

"Here, come out of this, you howling young whelp," cried one, seizing him roughly by the neck, "and make room for a man. We don't want any blubbering gals here."

But the rough grasp on Harry Godwin's collar did him good, and aroused his spirit again. Shaking off his assailant's hand he sprang from his seat, and faced round with clenched fist and sparkling eye.

"Don't lay your hand on me, mate," he said briskly enough; "I am a fool, I know, but I ain't no coward, and—— Oh! sir," he broke off suddenly as he caught sight of me, "only see here."

I took the letter he held out to me, and ran my eye rapidly through it. It was short enough and clear enough—only too clear. The last sentence will be sufficient.

"So it is no use, Harry," it ran. "Unless the two hundred pounds can be got at somehow before Christmas, and that I

know can't be, I must marry Mr. Pickering or father must go to prison. Tell Dick Golding—poor darling Dick——" and then there was a great blot, and the letter ended abruptly without even a signature. But there was no need for any signature, or for any explanation now of Harry Godwin's presence in that room. It was already September. The mail—the only mail that could possibly reach England by Christmas—sailed the next morning, or rather that morning, for day was already beginning to dawn. Dick Golding—"poor darling Dick"—was many a mile away. If fortune would but smile, the seventy-five pounds the boy already had in hand might even now be turned into the two hundred pounds, which alone could save Dick's sweetheart, his own pretty Sis, from the fate that hung over her. That was the story of Harry Godwin's visit to Mr. Hermann Rauch's Spielsaal in Canvas Town.

"Don't bother the lad," I said, and I felt something very like a tingling in my own eyelids, and following the impulse of the moment I held out the letter to Harry's late antagonist. He took it, looked at me, then at him, then slapped his great hand upon the table, and sprang to his feet.

"Harry Godwin!" he shouted. "Why, if I didn't think I knew the face! Are you Harry Godwin of Twofold Bay?"

The lump in poor Harry's throat was still too big to let him speak, but he nodded assent, and dashed the tears angrily away with his hand. The next moment the big digger was standing on the table, which creaked and groaned under his weight.

"Hallo there! mates," he roared at the top power of his stentorian lungs. "Hallo, there! Winners ahoy!"

There was a lull in the clamour which filled the room, and all turned towards the speaker, who pulled his battered billy-cock from his head and held it out at arm's length.

"Look here, lads," he cried; "you've all heard of Harry Godwin, the boy as jumped in right among the sharks to save Bill Curling's little wench."

A murmur of assent ran round the room.

"Aye, aye," said one hoarse voice, answering for the rest, "we've heard. What about he?"

"Why he's down in his luck, that's what he is. His fancy gal"—the speaker was making a slight confusion of persons

here, but it didn't signify—"his fancy gal's got to marry another one, if so be as he can't shell out two hundred pounds by this thundering mail, and darn me if I aren't been and rooked him out of every blessed shiner."

"More shame for you," growled the hoarse voice again in reply; "give the chap his quids back again, and be hanged to ye."

"Give 'em back!" roared the first speaker, as he dashed a huge handful of coin into the hat which he still held out oratorically. "In course I will. Here they be, and a dozen more to the back of 'em. But that aren't enough, boys, nor half enough. So now then, winners ahoy! Who'll shell out a handful of shiners to save plucky Hal Godwin's sweetheart?"

I must confess that, as a rule, I should not expect an appeal of this sort to meet with much success in a gambling-room. But your Australian or Californian digger "on the spree" is a very different animal from the businesslike habitué of Homburg or Monaco. He plays not so much for the gain as for the excitement of the game, and his great empty heart is often but the softer for the little call that his surroundings allow of being made upon it. The battered billycock made its round, and made it by no means in vain. Within ten minutes it was back again, and its contents poured out in a shining heap upon the table. There was enough in it to free pretty Sis and leave Harry a ten-pound note over into the bargain.

I must have been in a terribly didactic mood that morning, for as we hurried off to the post-office to despatch the precious remittance, I could not for the life of me help expressing a hope that the present success would not lead Harry into frequenting Mr. Ranch's establishment.

"Never again, sir," he answered with earnestness. "And, after all, sir," he added, looking up in my face with his broadest and merriest smile, "after all, you know, sir, I was only 'playing for love.'"

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

CANVAS AND KETTLE.

THE work of destruction and decay among the old waterside inns continues, oddly enough, down the left bank of the river, leaving the right shore comparatively untouched. Of the army of amphibious taverns which once gave the

name of Blackwall a festive ring, but two remain in their pristine shape—The Torrington Arms, with its garden reaching down to the river, and The Artichoke—once the goal of many joyous folk bent on the consumption of whitebait. Alack! things have changed, since the writer tasted his first whitebait at The Artichoke. I mind me that in those days rum-punch, properly iced, was invariably drunk with turtle and with whitebait. They never give me any now. My noble and wealthy friends, when they invite me to a riverside banquet, give me madeira and dry champagne galore, and say they are better for me than rum-punch. Perhaps they are, and very likely bacon and beans taken as a sort of Corinthian capital to a gastronomic column built up of turtle, sootje, salmon, turbot, trout, eels, whitebait in three forms, lamb cutlets, and ducks and peas, may be easier of digestion and more agreeable to the palate than venison; but I am not quite certain that the ancient meals, composed of sootje of flounders, whitebait plain, devilled black and devilled red, followed by a neck of venison, and moistened with rum-punch and port-wine or burgundy, were not better suited to persons endowed with simple tastes, and digestive organs of only moderate calibre. But fashion changes sides on the river as elsewhere, and the tide now sets towards Greenwich. The most famous of all the Blackwall houses for fish dinners has not, even like The Artichoke, preserved its identity. It has become translated from Lovegrove's into part railway station and part emigrant office.

On the Greenwich side there are many famous taverns—The Ship, The Crown and Sceptre, and The Trafalgar—all famous for whitebait. Into the long controversy concerning the true nature of whitebait it would hardly become me to enter. I have listened at The Trafalgar, and eke at Skindle's by Maidenhead-bridge, to long and desperate arguments concerning the right of the Clupea Alba to rank as a species. I have heard—sceptics declare that it is merely the fry of various fish, notably the herring, while those jealous of its individuality retorted that no herrings come within miles of the whitebait fisheries of the Thames. It was not, I thought, my province to settle this stern question. I was content to eat my whitebait, sip my wine, and reflect that the great Harry—eighth of that name—loved Greenwich as a residence, mainly on account of the white-

bait caught hard by, and that the Worshipful Company of Stationers had found out the virtues of whitebait as early as 1612. At the great funeral feast given in that year in honour of the founder of the Charterhouse, the bill of fare included "six dishes of whitebait." It would seem, however, that at a later date the tiny fishes came down in the world, for Pennant, writing in the eighteenth century, records that during the season there was a vast resort to Greenwich and Blackwall taverns of the "lower order of epicures." From this temporary abasement whitebait was raised by the ministerial dinner which, suspended under Mr. Gladstone's Government, was restored by Lord Beaconsfield, and was only omitted this month on account of the death of Mr. Ward Hunt. The origin of the annual Cabinet festivity is said to have been in the hospitality of a merchant named Preston, a Nova Scotia baronet and sometime member of parliament for Dover. This gentleman had a "fishing cottage" on the banks of Dagenham-reach, and in the spring-time often went thither with a friend or two, to enjoy a rest from parliamentary and other business. His most frequent guest was George Rose, the Secretary of the Treasury, and an Elder Brother of Trinity House. One day, as Mr. Rose and Sir Robert Preston were sipping their wine, or rather drinking it, for they did not sip in those days, the Secretary of the Treasury intimated to his host that Mr. Pitt might perhaps be prevailed upon to come to Dagenham, and would be certain to enjoy himself immensely. A day was named, the Premier was invited, and so delighted was he with the place and the company—they were all "three-bottle men"—that on taking leave he accepted an invitation for the following year.

For several years the "Heaven-sent Minister" and Mr. Rose continued to visit Dagenham, but in those days the world had not yet been shrunk by steam, and the distance was inconvenient. Sir Robert Preston proposed that they should dine at Greenwich, as being nearer London, and the party was increased to four—Mr. Pitt being permitted to bring Lord Camden. Then came Mr. Charles Long—afterwards Lord Farnborough—and one by one other notable Tories were invited, till, at last, Lord Camden considerably remarked that as they were all dining at a tavern, it was but fair that Sir Robert Preston should be relieved of the expense. After a warm

protest it was arranged that the dinner should be given, as usual, by Sir Robert Preston, that is to say, at his invitation; and he insisted on still contributing a buck and the champagne. The rest of the charges were defrayed by the guests, and on this plan the meeting continued to take place annually, till the death of Mr. Pitt.

The next year Sir Robert was requested to summon the guests to the Greenwich banquet—the list included by this time most of the Cabinet ministers. The feast, which generally took place on Trinity Monday, assumed a political or semi-political character before the death of Sir Robert Preston. When that hospitable baronet, full of years and portwine, departed this life, Lord Farnborough summoned the guests. Up to that time, the invitations had been sent privately, but they were thenceforward despatched in Cabinet boxes, and the dinner became a strictly ministerial celebration. Rivalled for a while by Blackwall, Greenwich has again asserted her superiority; but it must be confessed that beyond Blackwall the blight of the left riverside has not extended. There is at Purfleet a snug establishment, where fish, flesh, and fowl may be found in perfection, and good wine enjoyed over much pleasant yachting talk, imported from Erith and Gravesend and the domains of the Royal Thames Yacht Club generally. In these lower reaches of the river, waterside taverns put on an hotel air, aim at securing yachting customers, and perhaps at developing, in time, into full-blown yacht clubs. They are haunted by yachtsmen—a race by themselves—of whom I would fain discourse, as I watch the white-winged craft skimming over the crisp wavelets of Long Reach. There is much to be said of our yachting friends, for—

As in the land there is no beast,
But in the sea's by a fish exprest,

so are there yachtsmen and yachtsmen, as there are yachts and yachts, from the perky ten-ton cutter to the slashing yawl and elegant schooner; from the puffing, snorting steam-launch—the emblem of useful, obtrusive mediocrity—to the full-blown steamship, taut and trim, and competent to go from China to Peru, and farther yet.

Like the hunting-man, the yachting-man puts on many shapes.

First comes the Noble Yachtsman, who is often less identified with yachting than with

other pursuits. To men of this calibre a yacht is part of a great establishment, as is a string of horses at Newmarket, a drag and a showy team, a hunting-box at Melton, a shooting-box in the Highlands, a river in Norway, and a house in Grosvenor-square. This type of yachtsman, as a rule, cares but little for racing. He is a judge of a boat and her points, and is no more the slave of his sailing-master than of his trainer, having technical knowledge and a will of his own. His yacht is as good as can be bought for money, is furnished luxuriously, and manned by a smart and well-paid crew. He loves to extend hospitality to his friends afloat as ashore, being of the opinion that a yacht, like a drag, is a very Dead Sea apple unless enlivened with joyous company. There is less affectation of correctness of costume in the noble yachtsman than in other varieties of the genus. He is not curious as to colour and cut and buttons. When the weather is bad he dons the useful sou'-wester, not dreaming that he can possibly look like a coalheaver.

Of another complexion altogether is the man of birth but of very moderate means, who may be styled the Clever Yachtsman. His analogue may be found in the shires in the hunting season with a neat stud of hunters, ridden well, and ridden to sell. These noble animals—not always the “bonâ fide property” of the skilful cross-country rider—are yet, in his hands, apt to perform feats, which they decline to repeat for the purchaser. The clever yachtsman is perpetually having new yachts built for him, and very good yachts he insists on having from the builder whom he patronises with his custom. He is hospitable and amiable, and is blessed with a family who fill his yacht with an atmosphere of refinement. No more pleasant or amusing gentleman exists than he. Quick at a jest himself, and appreciative of fun in others, he combines English heartiness with that agreeable quality called “prévenance” by the French. There is no English word for this quality, and it is so rare that it is perhaps unnecessary to extend our vocabulary. To the clever yachtsman is irresistibly drawn the young plutocrat—often a good fellow enough, and not the golden-freighted beast that imaginative writers love to paint. Plutus junior is charmed with the well-bred air and caressing manners of his host, and, wanting a yacht himself, is impelled to ask if any consideration would

induce the owner to part with the “thing of life” which has just “walked the waters” to some tune, having carried off a hundred guinea prize. The clever yachtsman is prevailed upon, after a slight struggle, to part with the “best boat he ever had,” and forthwith orders another to carry his fortunes next season. Plutus junior imagines that he, the happy possessor of the Fly-by-night, will also carry off cups in due season; but his wishes are doomed to disappointment. To begin with, he has difficulties with his sailing-master, who raises a thousand objections to every stick in the new craft. At the suggestion of this important functionary various improvements are made, with the result of depriving young Plutus of all chance of the cups which swam in his mind’s eye, when he drew that particularly stiff cheque to the order of the clever yachtsman.

There is a variety of the clever yachtsman who may be designated for the sake of convenience the Building Yachtsman. He is wild for winning prizes, but distrusts the power of a merely good boat to carry them off. He likes to have what turfites call “a bit in hand,” and to acquire this advantage expends an amount of ingenuity, which would earn a handsome income if devoted to any other human pursuit. He is generally a Scotchman, who has in some way been connected with shipbuilding, and applies his knowledge to the measurement rules of yacht clubs. Like the man who meditates a great coup at Newmarket, he shapes his whole existence to the attainment of his end. By night and day he dreams of measurement rules, and the possible means of circumventing them. Can he, by shifting perpendiculars, building outlandish sterns, and producing strange uncanny craft, hope to hoodwink measuring secretaries and sailing committees? When at last he has hit upon a notion, which promises to go clean through all known systems of tonnage measurement like the proverbial coach-and-four through an Act of Parliament, he hies him to a builder, established in a remote spot, where the designs for the queer craft can be worked out free from observation or comment. At last the queer craft is entered for a number of races, and is variously measured by various authorities. The hopes of the proprietor are hardly realised. Having so built his ship that she should slip in among the forty-ton boats, he is a little dashed to find her variously assessed at

eighty, a hundred, and a hundred and twenty tons. With a large tonnage allowance the Ameliar-anna may manage to win two or three races, but sailing committees are soon "down upon her," as the late Admiral Rous was upon a horse "running a bye," and measure her out of every race she starts for. Then the building yachtsman retires to a further consideration of measurement rules, sections and models, and after long hatching produces from some creek on the Essex coast another yachting conundrum.

More legitimate in his aims and very amusing in his ways is the Domestic Yachtsman—a fine specimen of economical John Bull. By naturalists oppressed with a mania for sweeping classification, the domestic yachtsman is held to be one variety of that widely-spread genus known in England as the "molly-coddle," in America as the "hen-hussey," a male creature who understands housekeeping, pays his servants' wages himself, keeps a cellar-book with his own hand, and performs other household functions delegated to their womankind by males of a higher organisation. It must not be imagined that even the land variety of the creature is effeminate except in the art of driving a hard bargain, for he is masculine and vigorous enough in keeping his victims to it when made. The marine species possesses similar administrative powers, and is in fact the same creature under other conditions, the difference being merely that of a land-rat and a water-rat. When the domestic yachtsman is ashore, in winter quarters, he is generally domiciled in a large well-found house in a semi-fashionable quarter of London—in fact in one of those dwellings the owners of which can let them for a short London season, for sufficient cash down to pay rent, taxes, and servants' wages for the entire year. In houses of this kind I have generally remarked a plethora of men-servants, whose appearance suggests the yacht's crew projected for the nonce into livery. At the approach of summer the domestic yachtsman surrenders his house to some well-acred country squire, and takes to the water with his entire brood. His yacht, which merely serves him as a locomotive house, is the one thing which gives him importance. He lives in it all the summer and brags about it all the winter. He pays off costly hospitalities by inviting people on board his yacht, and hugely enjoys the status that by no means light-

heeled vessel confers upon him. She might aptly enough be named the Tortoise or the Turtle, for she is a genuine tub-yacht, buoyant enough to knock about in all but the worst weather; and when in port, where she spends more than two-thirds of her time, attracts immense consideration to her owner. There are places—enough and to spare—on the coast where a yacht bearing a family of presentable daughters is always welcome. A yacht "looks like money," and the owner is hardly expected to make any return for the hospitality offered to him and his, and they thus have a "good time" at little cost to the head of the family. It should be recollected that the power of going to and fro on the waters may be made to pay in various ways. The domestic yachtsman may run over to France to take on board his light French wine and tolerable brandy, and may drop in at the Channel Islands to buy poultry and eggs. He is also a fisherman where there is anything to be caught, and a dead shot at any edible kind of bird. Economy above everything is the aim of the domestic yachtsman, but occasionally his thoughts take a wider range—as, for instance, when Angelina Maud or Etheldreda Agnes captivates a local magnate. Then the domestic yachtsman shows that in the matter of settlements he is a very sea-lawyer.

Another class of yachtsman is the genuine Pot-hunter, who loves yachting dearly, but loves winning prizes too. His stock-in-trade must be of the best. His boat must be good of her class, her rig as near perfect as possible, and his crew smart to a man. He may be fairly compared to the racing-man who owns a stud of fair horses—of plating, or a little above plating form—and employs his time and ingenuity in "placing" these animals to the best advantage. The yachting pot-hunter arranges his programme on a very different scheme to that of the domestic yachtsman. Although not unmindful of the social dignity conferred by the possession of a yacht, he cares a great deal more for the hundreds, fifties, and twenties, to be picked up during a season afloat. There are so many regattas at the various yachting rendezvous round the coast, and so many prizes in cash, that by carefully arranging his voyage, he can contrive to lighten his expenses very materially. He must, however, be an enthusiast—a genuine yachtsman, with a keen love of the excitement of

racing. It is impossible to deny the claims of the pot-hunter to the rank of a genuine yachtsman, for he knows every good point of his boat, and in case of his sailing-master being ill or out of humour, can sail his boat admirably himself. It is true that he likes the money, but he has, as well, a keen appreciation of the glory of winning.

There is yet another species of yachtsman who cares for glory alone, not purely the glory of seamanship, but the renown conferred by newspapers. To this class belong the member for Brighton and the proprietor of the New York Herald. When yachtsmen of this type contemplate a race across the Atlantic, it is sure to be profusely advertised. The conditions of the match are debated at length, and public expectation is worked up to a high pitch before the great international, or ocean, or inter-polar race can be arranged. At last it is settled, and by this time, gods, men, and the columns of newspapers are fully occupied with the great event. When it comes off, it is invested with all the interest of a decisive battle; that is to say, if the world happens at the time to be otherwise at peace. Intent on fame of a slightly different kind is the yachtsman who owns a big steam-yacht, and takes her to the Arctic regions or round the world, with the object of writing a book. It requires a keen love of the sea, and of notoriety, to venture over long distances in all weathers with a four or five hundred ton steamer. Probably the voyage is safe enough in a perfectly-found and perfectly-manned vessel; but those who have only crossed the ocean in a two or three thousand ton steamship can have little idea of the treatment a small vessel experiences in the heavy swell of the Atlantic, and among the ice-fields of the polar seas. It would not, therefore, be fair to deny these ambitious steam yachtsmen their meed of praise, although it might be wished that a tendency to exaggerate their most trivial deeds were not too apparent in the inevitable book, for the sake of which they are done. It is not wonderful that, viewed from the deck of a yacht, storms are more violent, mountains higher, and escapes narrower than from a larger standpoint, and merciful consideration should be extended to the minuteness of the log, which is the first cause of the voyage, nor should the landlubber sneer at the small results of the patient dredging and collecting, undertaken for the sake of investing the yachtsman and his book with a pseudo-scientific air.

Neither at Yokohama, nor at Ham-merfest, is seen another curious yachting type, the Yachtsman who is yachtless. Mr. Soapy Sponge having undergone a sea change into a creature, if not rich, yet strange, is found most commonly at Erith, at Gravesend, and sometimes as far away as Southsea or Cowes. There is no doubt about his make-up or his conversation. Both bespeak the unmistakable "salt." His rig—personal, of course, for he is boatless—is perfect. In foul weather or in fair he dresses the part exactly. Not a crease is awry, not a button out of place. In tarpaulin or in serge, in straw or in sou'-wester, his lines are copied from the best models. He is every inch a yachtsman—to look upon and to listen to. He will discourse by the yard upon the occult mysteries of measurement, he is profound on every variety of rig, and is a keen critic of sailing-masters. His memory is prodigious. He can tell under what conditions of wind and tide the Mudlark beat the Seasing five seasons ago, and can explain exactly what effect the lengthening of the former famous cutter will have upon her pace. He can tell his friends where and in what company to enter their boats so as to win a prize, and he condescends in the kindest manner possible to potter about in their craft. He is fond of loafing about Woolwich and Shoeburyness in nautical *négligé*, and is supposed by his admirers to understand all about gunnery and the war-ships of the future. He is, in fact, an authority on everything nautical, from the Inflexible to the Whitehead torpedo. Second only to his technical knowledge are his social powers. He can sing and accompany himself on the pianoforte, and is therefore popular with yachtswomen; and, being supposed to inspire the newspapers on naval matters, is looked upon respectfully by the men. It is true that his popularity seldom lasts beyond a cruise, but this affects him little, as every change of host supplies him with an addition to the long list of stories which confirm his reputation as an amusing man. He is soon the guest of another yachtsman, and then his old jokes and funny stories come out afresh, garnished with minute and interesting particulars concerning the host of yesterday, and the frank enjoyment and cordiality of his new friends warm, as it were, the cold shoulder of the old.

Allied to the saline species of the

genus are two varieties of the river yachtsman. One of these is not altogether of the sea, nor yet of the river, being, even as the lordly salmon, found by turns in fresh, in brackish, and in salt water. His range may be said to extend from Albemarle-street to Southsea. At each of these places he has a snug retreat, and in winter, when his yacht is laid up, he passes a vast quantity of time in talking and reading about yachts in his snug clubhouse. He is a genuine yachtsman enough and a good fellow, often a naval officer on the retired list, sometimes an enriched merchant commander, not unfrequently an engineer, now and then a surgeon. His favourite course is from Gravesend round the Mouse Light and back, and on the occasion of the great annual matches he carries the hospitality of the yachtsman to the extremest limits. He is not as a rule a dandy, as is the second variety just alluded to, the true freshwater sailor for whom the Thames enters the German Ocean at Westminster Bridge. The up-river yachtsman and his boat are beautiful to look upon, and his skill is mainly shown in dodging fishing-punts in narrow waters, and in getting through lock-pounds without giving the ladies, by whom he is almost invariably accompanied, the slightest alarm. Yet beneath that smooth exterior oft burns a wild ambition to become a member of a yacht club, to dare the perils of Lea Reach, nay, to venture beyond the Nore itself, and brave the billows of the Channel. Unhappily, ambition sometimes takes another shape, and the freshwater sailor forsakes his white-winged craft for a fussy, puffing, snorting, aggressive steam-launch, with which he desecrates the leafy splendour of Cliefden and the placid beauty of Pangbourne and Goring. The excuse for a steam-launch is that it is "so comfortable for ladies"—that is to say, for dames who love a vessel on an even keel, and are not insensible to the charms of luncheon, begun with hot soup and tapered off with sandwiches of foies gras. These up-river beauties are of another race from the charming yachswomen now blooming—not alone—in the summer seas of the Isle of Wight. Even at Cowes itself, the possession of a superb series of yachting costumes does not always connote the accomplished yachswoman. I am credibly informed by my aunt, that of the multitude of England's fair daughters who

make the pier at Cowes a thing of beauty during the present month, only a small proportion go afloat. From personal observation I am inclined to agree with my aunt, the aim of the true yachswoman apparently being to trample on the pride of millinery with the greater pride evolved from a minute acquaintance with nautical mysteries. The yachswoman who has been on a cruise or two, if not quite to Jerusalem and Madagascar, yet to the Orkneys and the Mediterranean, affects—while afloat *bien entendu*—to be "quite" the female sailor. She professes to like dirty weather. As the breeze freshens she loves to don her tarpaulin, and shrinks not if hands communicating at the other end with long muscular arms and a six-foot specimen of male humanity aid her in getting on her rough-weather wraps.

There is little or no affectation about the yachswoman, save in the matter of nautical acquirement. She is especially proud of her skill in boxing the compass, will take her "trick" at the tiller, or "take a sight" as well as the smartest of midshipmen. Moreover, she is weather-wise, and can appraise the promise of a "bit of blue" or of a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, to a nicety, and with due reference to the quarter of the wind. She is uncomplaining under adverse circumstances, and bears the "wild north-easter" and the sirocco with equal serenity. Only those who have cruised with the genuine yachswoman can truly appreciate her. The conditions of yachting incline, perhaps, to make her somewhat overmuch bon camarade, and to promote a frankness—not to say loudness—of tone. Her detractors assert that she can, and under extreme circumstances will, "swear like a trooper." She must know how to "cuss," for while in harbour she hears perforce much rough language; but I solemnly affirm, with my hand on *Hunt's Yachting Magazine*, that I have never heard her exhibit her proficiency in this branch of nautical learning.

A notice of yachting types would be incomplete without mention of the Yachting Secretary, not unfrequently an ex-military officer—for in what position in the world, from that of a policeman to that of a wine-merchant, is the ex-soldier not found? The perfect yachting secretary is a mysterious and impenetrable personage, who shrouds himself in mystery, and never knows anything save officially.

Another type, but a very variable one, is the sailing-master, who, except when he has to deal with a practised hand, worries and tyrannises over the man who pays him and obeys him. Over the young yachtsman he exercises absolute sway; and the list of alterations and additions a boat requires when a new sailing-master comes into power throws Leporello's "catalogo" completely into the shade. As a rule he finds fault with everything; but if told curtly to make the best of it by "one who knows," accepts the inevitable, kindly enough. Towards one who doesn't know he naturally entertains the same feeling that an accomplished chef has for a master who "does not care what he eats"—a compound of pity, toleration, and contempt. It cannot, however, be denied that he knows his business, and is often the beau ideal of a sailor. Allowance being made for degree, equal commendation may be given to his crew, generally composed of men carefully picked and trained to smart work under all conditions of wind and weather. Quickness of hand and eye are indispensable to the yachting crew, who must not only know what to do, but how to do it quickly and effectually in the face of one of those accidents which are perpetually occurring in a sailing-match. It is not too much to say that perhaps the best seamanship in the world is shown upon our yachting fleet.

STORM AND HAIL.

WHILE a science is still young—in the condition of meteorology at the present day—it is not enough to enunciate accurate ideas, the result of observation or experiment. There is an adversary to be first put down in the shape of false notions, derived from impressions immediately made on our senses, and adopted without question by every preceding generation. They reach us with all the authenticity of an heirloom supported by innumerable attestations—which attestations, in fact, are nothing more than an indefinite repetition of the same sensations, produced by the same phenomena upon identical organs. A plausible and pardonable mistake becomes a prejudice; and prejudice, with time, ripens into venerable and world-wide belief. We need only refer to that article of the popular creed—an optical illusion accepted as fact—which teaches that so-called "waterspouts" pump up water

from the sea, until it reaches and fills the clouds.*

Vulgar errors of that class are excusable; for the first care of most human beings is how to obtain their daily bread. Until this is assured, they can have little either of leisure or relish for the contemplation of natural phenomena. Nevertheless, everybody knows what a tempest is, while many are forewarned by the nervous uneasiness and oppression which announce its coming. Everybody has heard the crash of thunder, seen the sharp, quick glare of lightning, and felt the pelting of grape-shot hail. But it does not thence follow that anybody has really observed a tempest.

M. Faye—on whose valuable notice *Sur les Orages et sur la Formation de la Grêle*, the present paper is based—draws a distinction between seeing and observing. Here are two very different states of mind into which the occurrence of nature's grander spectacles may throw the person who witnesses them. He will either fall into a purely passive state, simply receiving impressions, often deep and terrible, which his imagination immediately accounts for by some preconceived notion; or he will be roused into an active mood which, casting aside first impressions, resolves to investigate the phenomena themselves, to discover by strict search their nature and origin, or to make out what they are by experiments logically planned and undertaken. It is the active frame of mind only which constitutes science, whilst the passive state gives rise to no more than sentiments of poetic admiration, superstitious terrors, or prejudices.

In respect to tempests, men had advanced no farther than the passive state of mind up to the commencement of the seventeenth century; for modern science can reckon from no earlier date. Before that time, the stream of human knowledge was blocked by an inert mass of floating weeds, the accumulated growth of popular ignorance. Unreasoning prejudice constituted the grand obstacle to science; it veiled the meaning of the most decisive phenomena, and literally closed men's eyes when they had clear evidence of facts before them. The history of science is not confined to its discoveries. That history, to be complete, should also comprise the erroneous beliefs which so long fettered its march, and which even now sometimes lead us astray.

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 14, p. 449, "Waterspouts."

For the simple spectator (the observer is out of court at present) who watches, not without secret apprehension, what is passing overhead, a thunderstorm is a local fact; and its assumed restricted locality is one of the causes of its being misunderstood. He takes it for a drama got up on the spot and isolated amidst the ordinary fluctuations of the atmosphere. Every tempest is preceded by precursory symptoms, which constitute its prologue. The sky is still bright, the winds are silent; but the calm is heavy and the heat stifling. Ill-omened clouds appear on the horizon; gradually they mount to the zenith and pass beyond it without apparent cause, for not a breath of air is stirring below. The heavens are darkened; the low growl of distant thunder is heard. The sky is soon completely overclouded, and the storm bursts forth in all its fury. The wind rises, blowing in violent gusts and squalls. The clouds, transpierced by celestial fires, pour forth torrents of rain; or hail falls noisily, cutting and smashing all that it touches; whilst the lightning seems to select its prey, and then darts from heaven to give the fatal blow. After a time, the flashes and the peals of thunder slacken in force and frequency; the thick clouds appear to dissolve; with the return of calm, refreshing coolness overspreads the face of nature.

It is an old drama, but never fails to startle by its strange and wonderful sublimity. The whole action seems concentrated on one spot and speedily to reach its dénouement there. Every tragic element is present; surprise, terror, irresistible fatality, smitten victims who, says popular superstition, are doubtless guilty. It is a subject for poets, painters, and musicians, whose treatment of it has won for them just admiration. But all this is a mere matter of sensations and impressions, making not the slightest approach to science. Our spectator is a purely passive being. If he thinks at all, his thought is that the drama has been played for him or his. Immaterial darts which strike, burn, and kill, without visible projectile, could, in old times, only be hurled by a divinity. Jupiter Tonans held in his hand a sheaf of thunderbolts, to punish, warn, or overawe mortals.

To be an observer instead of a spectator, one must rise above this passive state of mind. And the most ordinary observer, once freed from prejudice, will first ask whence came all those clouds which rose from the horizon to the zenith. He will

note their direction, and then go and enquire, within another horizon several miles off, what happened there whilst the tempest here was only coming on. He will do the same in the direction towards which the thunder-clouds went away; and assuredly he will soon discover that the storm was not local, did not originate on the spot where he dwells, and consequently was not intended for him alone, nor stirred up on his account, for his special entertainment, reward, or punishment. But in former days, such an investigation of grand natural phenomena would have been called "presumption;" and even now equivalent terms are applied to scientific enquiry by those who would hold the human mind enslaved. We cannot too often reassert the fact, that tempests do not originate on the spot over which they burst and rage.

One branch of our subject, namely, lightning and thunder, themselves supply an excellent example of the mode in which natural philosophy attains its ends. The ancients had observed, without bestowing much thought about it, a curious property of the bits of amber brought by adventurous sailors from the shores of the North Sea; which property, electricity, derives its name in consequence from *ἤλεκτρον*, amber. But when observation and experiment began to bring forth real science, it was found that electricity could be obtained by the very same process, i.e. friction, from substances much less rare than amber. At the same time scientists discovered the conducting power of metals, in opposition to the isolating powers of amber, resin, and glass. Next, they succeeded in accumulating, in metal, the electricity developed by friction from the latter objects. After persevering and varied trials, a continuous supply of electricity was obtained, until the first spark flew off from a conductor. Could this be a microscopic form of lightning? The luminous hint was followed up.

But to establish the identity of the two phenomena, lightning had to be brought down and manipulated, before they could be sure that it was absolutely the same agent as that produced by rubbing a bit of amber on your coat-sleeve. In obedience to which requirement of inductive science, electricity was extracted from the clouds. In the United States, Franklin flew his famous kite; in France, Romas and Dalibard planted pointed metallic conductors on the tops of the loftiest edifices; both proving that the clouds are vast

reservoirs of electricity, and that lightning is identical with the small crackling spurts of light which the lecturer is able to exhibit to his audience. Those experiments moreover gave us lightning-conductors, which save our buildings from destruction—except in one case, when concentrated electricity assumes a most singular and remarkable form, to be noted shortly.

The first storm seriously studied to any purpose was the memorable tempest of July 13, 1788, which carried destruction with it across a portion of Western Europe, and which excited so much interest in the French Academy of Sciences that it delegated one of the members, the Abbé Tessier, assisted by Messieurs Buache and Leroi, to draw up a report. This report, illustrated by maps of the country ravaged, could hardly be better done at the present day. We should now give, with fuller details, the movements of the barometer before, during, and after the storm; but, in 1788, that instrument's close connection with atmospheric phenomena was yet unknown.

The maps show two bands, almost parallel to each other, along which hail fell. Between them, and on each side outside them, are three stripes visited only by rain. What is clear, admitting not the slightest doubt, is that from the Touraine to Flanders and Brabant at the very least—that is, over a distance of a hundred leagues, or nearly three hundred miles—the two bands of hail kept constantly separate, although with an inconstant interval varying from three to seven and a half leagues, and thereby giving an average intermediate distance of five and a quarter leagues. The varying breadth of the two hail-bands united gives an average breadth of six-and-a-half leagues. From less precise information, it is all but certain that the length of the bands, both ways, was greater than is stated above. The direction of the storm was from southwest to north-east. Southwards, it was felt in the Saintonge, on the borders of the Bay of Biscay; and to the north, after leaving Flanders, it traversed Holland, sweeping beyond the Texel.

The darkness consequent on the storm was compared to a total eclipse of the sun. There was great disagreement respecting the size of the hailstones; according to the public papers, some of them weighed as much as eight or ten French pounds—doubtless a great exaggeration. M. Tessier, who happened to be in the middle of the

eastern band, confirms the testimony of trustworthy persons (who took the precaution to measure and weigh the hailstones immediately after they fell) that amongst them there were very large ones; some regular in shape, almost spherical, from one to three inches in diameter; others irregular, like branching stalactites, or tending to an octahedral form, or merely lumps of ice. The largest actual measurement did not give hailstones of half a pound.

The size of hailstones is often compared with that of pigeons', hens', or turkeys' eggs. According to Tessier's experiments, a hailstone as big as a pigeon's egg weighs (approximately in English avoirdupois) a quarter of an ounce; as big as a hen's egg, two ounces; as a turkey's, three ounces. In other storms, hailstones must have been heavier than this, killing partridges and even hares in the fields. At Nemours, in 1839, many sheep died in consequence of contusions inflicted by hailstones on the 10th of October in that year. The present writer has seen an Italian city unroofed, all the tiles having been smashed by hailstones.

People were pretty well agreed as to the time during which hail fell in each locality along the course of the storm of 1788. Long as it appeared to the sufferers, it only lasted seven or eight minutes at most. But the quantity fallen made up for the brevity of the fall. At Etampes, in the eastern band, the hail was two-and-a-half feet thick in the corners of buildings exposed to the wind, and took three days afterwards to melt. The noise it made in falling was said to be as if millions of walnuts had been shot out from the clouds.

M. Faye's theory of hail is briefly this. First, all storms are atmospheric whirlpools of varying dimensions, often so vast and enormous that the arc of their circumference which passes over a given district appears to the observers there to be a straight line. Secondly, the revolving motion of whirlpools, whether in water or in air, has a downward tendency. In popular language, all whirlpools suck in things till they reach the very bottom, as is only too well known to swimmers and sailors. The curve described by an object drawn into a whirlpool is not a circle (because then it would only go round and round, remaining always at the same level), but a conical spiral gradually diminishing downwards, resembling a corkscrew whose upper twists should be

larger and wider than those towards the point. In this way, a dead leaf, caught by a circling eddy, spins round and round, sinking lower and lower in the watery funnel, till it is whisked to the bottom, makes a plunge, and disappears. Thirdly, the upper regions of the atmosphere are excessively cold. The highest clouds which float there, cirri or mare's-tails, are composed of minute ice-spicules, as aeronauts can prove by pinching experience. These ice-spicules and this intensely cold air and vapour, drawn down to the lower strata of the atmosphere by aerial whirlpools, condense and freeze the moisture with which they find the air there perhaps saturated. Exactly as a cold bottle brought up from a cellar causes the vapour in a warm room to settle on it in the form of dew, so each ice-spicule attracts and freezes the moisture in the warmer clouds which the whirlwind penetrates, and so becomes the nucleus of a hailstone. We see that dust and sand, raised by eddies of wind in our roads and streets, are held in suspension, while being carried hither and thither by the whirling gusts before they fall to the ground. During a hurricane, bulky and heavy objects fly about in the air like feathers. In like manner, the infant hailstones, born perhaps of flakes of fine snow, while performing their rapid merry-go-round, increase by the addition of frozen vapour, or unite and are cemented into a single mass, until they finally reach the earth as monster hail or shapeless lumps of ice.

Again; if we stand on a bridge during a flood and especially after a break-up of ice which still partially clogs the stream, we shall see that the little whirlpools formed in the water after its passage between the piers of the bridge, continue whirling and whirling without subsiding into smooth water, until they have followed the current of the stream quite out of sight. Just so, aerial whirlpools pursue their course unbroken for enormous distances. Their path is marked by a band of hailstones, or the effects of an irresistible hurricane, or perhaps only of torrential rain. And, as in the case of floods we may watch two or more small whirlpools travelling downstream side by side; so may we have to deplore the devastation of a district by two or more hail-discharging or tree-uprooting tornadoes, each pursuing a distinct and separate, but almost parallel, line of progression.

A more puzzling phenomenon is seen in

globular lightning—the balls of fire which have sometimes been actually observed to descend slowly from the clouds. On approaching the ground, they seem to avoid alighting on it, but move about in various directions, and then either rise in the air and disappear, or burst with a loud report if they encounter any obstacle. Sometimes these fire-balls will enter rooms, coming down a chimney, perhaps, and going out again by an open door or window without touching anything. They have no resemblance to lightning proper or to electric sparks, but rather to a spherical and gaseous Leyden phial, charged internally and externally with opposite electricities, whose sudden recombination is determined by the slightest shock. Their density cannot differ much from that of air, since they wander about indifferently upwards or downwards, backwards or forwards, nor is their course influenced by ordinary electrical attractions.

M. Faye explains their formation by the fact that whirlwinds and waterspouts are vast conductors which bring down the cirri and the electricity of the upper regions. As the tension of the so-called fluid is greatest at the points of ordinary conductors, so it is at the small end of waterspouts. The mist formed by their apparent sheath is thrown off at the rapidly gyrating extremity, like an overgrown soap-bubble, charged with condensed electricity without and within. The practical point connected with fireballs is that they are in no wise attracted by lightning-conductors. Fortunately, their effects being much weaker than those of ordinary lightning, they do not give great cause for alarm. Nevertheless, to render powder magazines completely secure, besides the usual precaution of fixing conductors which dip into a pond or stream, every aperture should be carefully closed on the approach of a tempest. Otherwise, an unsuspected sort of lightning may quietly steal in, stretching itself out lengthwise like a worm, if need be, through a very small hole, exploding inside and occasioning disaster.

There are regions where tempests are so frequent and fierce as to make any port welcome in a storm. Two generals, coming from Lima, were traversing together a pass of the Andes. Their mules were slow-paced, perhaps through fatigue. Suddenly, a shower of hail rattled round them; lightning darted incessantly; the very earth, provoked by the contact of

clouds, flashed forth fire in answer to them. The wind blew with such violence that the travellers feared they would be swept away, mules and all. They looked about for shelter, but none was to be seen. Their path followed the brink of a small mountain lake.

"If we were to get into the water," said one, "we should be less exposed to the gale and the lightning. What do you think of it?"

"A capital idea!" replied the other. "Of two evils, we must choose the least."

Dismounting, into the water they walked, until up to their necks. Two minutes afterwards, they had the satisfaction of seeing both their mules killed by an electrical discharge. On emerging after the storm from their liquid retreat, they had to travel, wet, on foot, and supperless, several leagues to reach a human habitation. History relates that, on looking in a glass, they found their hair had turned not gray, but white.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER III. CRITICISM.

THE fact was not gratifying; but the profits produced by my translation of *L'Oncle de ma Tante* were greatly in excess of the pecuniary rewards obtained by my poetical works. In truth, poetry continued to be "a drug in the market;" whereas, farce flourished wonderfully. Madame Vivienne entrusted me with other plays of the like class to operate upon. "You see," she explained, "the man we usually get to do these things for us has gone rather out of his mind. He can't even be trusted now to look out words in the French dictionary. Some say it's drink, some say it's debt, and some say it's because of the bad conduct of his wife. But I shouldn't think it's that. He must have translated too many French plays to take that sort of thing much to heart." I produced English versions of the well-known *vandevilles*, *La Blanchisseuse*, *Mystérieuse*, *L'Ours et le Perroquet*, and *Qui Dort Dîne*. I should state that the success obtained by these productions was greatly due to the exertions of Collarby, the popular low comedian, and to the exquisite

singing of Madame Vivienne. One of her songs—it was entitled *Clever Little Cupid*—especially pleased the public.

I was not proud of my success, but the money I received was very welcome to me. Nick professed to be indignant on the subject; not so much that he was opposed to my making money, but he thought it highly objectionable that money should be made in such wise. Why not make money as other people do by means of trade, he demanded? He could not be made to understand that translating plays from the French was a sort of trade. Really, it was hardly respectable, he urged. I did not contradict him. But I perceived him one night in the boxes laughing greatly, though with an air of protest all the while, at the humorous exploits of Collarby.

I saw Mr. Leveridge from time to time. He looked older, and his face had acquired a careworn expression; but he had recovered his calmness, and even a measure of his old pleasant blitheness of manner.

"You must not shrink from speaking to me about Doris," he said earnestly. "Remember that, my dear boy; I am always anxious to hear of her, and to hear good news. I may not hope to see her—not yet. Although, in the time to come, I do not doubt that we shall meet again, and that she will be able to look with kindness upon her old fond friend—with kindness and forgiveness. I was greatly to blame. But if you knew how I have sorrowed, you would, as she would, think of me tenderly and compassionately. Do not fear any renewal of the old folly—the old madness—the old wickedness, I may almost call it. Doris is to me but as a dearly-loved daughter—the child of my age. Speak to me of her, Basil. There is still something of magic to me in the mention of her name. Tell me that she is well, that she is happy. And this M. Riel, her husband. She loves him very much? But, of course she does; it was not merely to escape me that she fled with him. No, no, she would not have done that. She loves him, without doubt. And he—he is kind to her?"

I suppose he read upon my face some dislike of these questions.

"I should not ask such things, I know—I know. Of course, he is kind to her—he could not but be kind to her. No one could. But what has he ever done to deserve the happiness of winning my Doris? Ah, it's a fine thing to own an Antinous face! Confound the fellow, with his youth and his good looks. What does poverty matter under such circumstances? For

they are poor, Basil—they are very poor. You need not trouble yourself to deny it."

I did not deny it. I simply did not want to discuss the matter with him.

"Because I know all about it, much more than you think I know; they are poor, they must be poor, they can't help being poor. But, as I said, what does poverty matter when we are young and happy? It can't matter very much, if the poverty doesn't go beyond a certain point. But people must live, you know; they must have money wherewith to buy food and firing—or else—well, you know, Basil, or else it's the very devil and all! There can be no happiness where there's no dinner—where the larder's empty, and the kitchen fire's out. Basil, do you know what Doris has been doing?"

"What has she been doing?"

"She has been selling her drawings in the Burlington-arcade. She has been pawning her jewels, poor dear little soul. How do I know? Because I've watched her—because I can't help watching her. I'm drawn to her, I hover about her, as a moth about a candle. Only I'm an old moth, a burnt moth, and I dread the flame. I don't go too near it. Yet I have been near to her, very near sometimes. She doesn't know—she has never suspected—how near, how very near. I could have touched her; if she had turned she would have been face to face with me. But she did not turn; she never gave me a thought; she was too much occupied with her husband, with her happiness, yes, and with her poverty. And she pawned her jewels, poor child, pawned them or sold them, I'm not sure which, to buy bread, I suppose, for herself and her Frenchman. How could he let her do it? Has he no love for her? Has he no respect for himself? He should rather have worked till he dropped, than have suffered such a thing. But I don't want to say a word against him. Only, I don't think he likes work very much; or perhaps he could not get work. I would have helped him, of course, but he felt, no doubt, that he couldn't come to me. He thinks of me as of an enemy, I daresay, and Doris thinks so too, perhaps. No, no, she wouldn't do that—she wouldn't do that; she must know me better than that. Basil, I so want to help Doris and her husband, but I don't know how—I don't know how."

I could not tell him how.

"You think me wrong for prying and peeping about so? I should have locked myself up in my studio, and tried to forget

the whole business. I should have put Doris and all thought of her far from me, and turned my back upon my folly, as people call it, for ever. It's easy to say that. How good, and wise, and happy, and contented we should all be if we could only do what other people tell us to do! But it can't be, you know. We are the best judges of the burthen, who have to bear it on our backs. We may shift it and shift it, according to the advice of the bystanders, but there is no making it lighter, do what we may with it. I am an old fool. I suppose that's past doubt. Everybody says so, at any rate. And I can't expect sympathy or pity. An old man in love! It's absurd, isn't it? He should know better at his time of life. Let us throw yet another stone at the old dotard before we pass on."

I felt for him, especially when he went on to tell me that his faith in his art had declined, that his hand had lost its cunning, that painting was no longer the happiness it had once been to him. He confessed that sometimes he sat for hours before his easel, but could not bring himself to touch the canvas with his brush. "Othello's occupation's gone!" he said, with a weary smile and something like the ghost of his old cheeriness. And then he mentioned that a new anxiety troubled him. Miss Leveridge was seriously ill. "She's been playing with illness all her life, but it is something more and worse than play this time." The doctors, it seemed, hinted at paralysis, but refrained from open declaration on the subject. She might recover, it was thought; but her constitution was feeble and age weighed heavily upon her. "Poor Deborah," continued Mr. Leveridge, "she's led but an ailing and sad-coloured life. I don't think she's ever known what it is to be quite happy herself, and perhaps she's never done very much to make other people happy. And yet she's a good woman, too; and she's meant well always, and she owns a kinder heart and a more affectionate disposition, than she's ever had credit for. She's been a dear good sister to me, though she never cared for my pictures, and was always, I think, a little afraid of and shocked at me. I shall miss her terribly. She hasn't been what you'd call a comfort to me or to anyone, but it has done me good having her to think about, and provide for, and protect. She had my welfare and happiness always at heart. She was grievously offended with poor Doris—very angry with her, indeed.

It was no use my saying a word; it arose from her sisterly affection for me. I couldn't well scold her for that, you know. Poor Deborah! she never knew or suspected it, but every word she spoke against Doris fell like a lash upon my heart. She could not understand that Doris was not to blame for not loving me, for preferring another's love to mine. It was hard to sit still and hear poor Doris abused and accused, but Deborah would not listen to a word in her defence. And she seemed to think she could best show her love for me by making very clear her hatred of Doris. But as I said before, she has always meant well, has Deborah. It's sad to think that she should be so weakly and suffering! I hope for the best, but sometimes hope seems to have died out of my heart. I grow old, Basil, and very, very sad."

He addressed me under some restraint, I think. He found it difficult to speak with patience of Doris's husband, and yet he felt that he was not likely to judge him impartially. Can one ever be quite fair to a favoured and successful rival? He seemed really anxious, however, to mention M. Riel only with temper and moderation. "He's her husband, and she loves him. I must always remember that," he would say sometimes. It was with some indignation, however, he learnt that Doris was really to appear upon the stage.

"The pity of it—the pity of it," he repeated again and again; "and her husband permits it! Is he mad? Has he no heart? Does he know what he is doing? Doris an actress! Has it come to that? And why—why does she do this thing? To earn money to buy bread withal! And I am powerless in the matter! I am rich—at least, the world so counts me—and yet I may not say, 'Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond!' Basil, this thing should not be. Is there no way to prevent it?"

"There is no way," I said. For I knew Doris's resoluteness, and that all attempt to stay her would be in vain. I knew, too, how much there was to commend in her conduct, how worthy was her motive. I applauded her courage and her cleverness, though, in truth, I regretted as much as did Mr. Leveridge the necessity that made her an actress.

"She's brave enough, of course," he said, "and clever enough. I never questioned that; but she should be too clever to do such a thing as this. My Doris—our Doris on the stage! Her mother's daughter an actress! Poor child! poor

child! She has no notion of the sort of life she is entering upon. Oh yes, she may succeed. She is so singularly beautiful; there's such a wondrous charm about her; the public will be very foolish indeed if it doesn't applaud her greatly, if it doesn't fall straightway in love with her. But does Doris need a success of that kind? The stage is a miserable career for a woman. It hardens, and coarsens, and soils, and unsexes her. It's a miry road; there's no journeying upon it without getting splashed and sullied. And what travelling companions! What greasy shoulders she must rub against! What grimy hands she must grasp! Is there no way to prevent it, Basil, I ask again? Is there no way to prevent it?"

"There is no way," I repeated.

Mr. Leveridge fretted, and chafed, and fumed. All the same, Doris made her first appearance upon the stage.

I was very anxious on her account. I was, I think, even more nervous and agitated than she was. I shared, in some degree, Mr. Leveridge's opinions on the subject. And yet I held the histrionic art in far higher regard. Apparently, he could see only its prosaic side; would scarcely admit, indeed, that it owned any poetic qualities whatever. An artist himself, he seemed unable to estimate fairly the value of an art varying from his own. He could not consider the theatre, he was so engaged in taking count of the dust and stains upon its boards.

I cannot pretend to enter upon a calm and deliberate criticism of Doris's performance. My own interest in it was so deep as to perplex me greatly. I mistrusted my own powers of judgment; they were thrown out of balance, as it were, by my personal and private interest in the cause. But I have often thought that Doris underrated her own gifts and accomplishments as an actress. Because she was adopting the profession of the stage with a view to its pecuniary rewards, she judged herself to be incapable of the loftier and more inspiring emotions that have carried the great players to triumph. Yet she had many genuine qualifications for theatrical success. I need say no more about her beauty; that, perhaps, asserted itself less distinctly upon the stage than I had expected. But she was singularly graceful of movement and gesture; she enlisted sympathy in a special degree; an air of refinement and intelligence invariably attended her; while her voice was of firm quality and full of

music. As a child she had been mercurial and vivacious even to the tips of her fingers, and she possessed a curious power of abandoning herself to the enthusiasm and excitement of the minute. There was to my—perhaps prejudiced—thinking, something of intense life, of quick sensitiveness, of poetic fervour, of feverish passion about her acting I have noted in the acting of few other actresses. And be it understood that she was seen under very great disadvantages. Certain discomforts of dress I knew nothing of at the time—they were not, I think, perceived by the audience, however embarrassing they may have been to her; but the feeling of stage-fright that for a time afflicted her almost paralysed her efforts. And she was very indifferently supported; indeed, she was greatly hindered by the incompetence of her play-fellows. Mr. Toomer Hooton might be a well-skilled elocutionist, but, as an actor, he seemed to me simply detestable. He was a sort of treasury of stage tricks and artifices of the worst kind—an example of all the faults he should have instructed his pupils to avoid.

"You wouldn't think," said Uncle Junius, "that he was a decoy duck, to induce people to take to the stage, would you? I should call him a scarecrow, to frighten folks away. Yet he's very well pleased with himself; and what a comfort that is! He amuses everybody; sets us all laughing, and he doesn't know it. Why, it's almost like doing good by stealth!"

Mr. Leveridge was at the theatre on the night of Doris's performance, although he had vowed, again and again, that nothing should induce him to go near the place—that he should be too seriously hurt, too deeply offended. All the same, he had secured a private box in case he should change his mind, or, as he protested, merely because he wished to patronise the performance.

"Wonderfully clever," he said, "wonderfully clever; I've seen nothing like it since Miss O'Neill. I couldn't have believed our Doris was so clever. How could she possibly cram all those long-winded speeches into her poor little head? What an effort of memory! Why, you know, when she was a little girl she couldn't be persuaded to learn her lessons upon any terms. I am quite taken by surprise. All

the same, you know, I'd sooner, by a thousand pounds, that the thing hadn't taken place at all. It grieves me to see her it, for all she does it so cleverly and prettily. She was terribly frightened—first, poor child. It made me cry to look at her scared face, and to see her tremble so. But she's better now, she's very much better, her courage is coming back to her. And now I'm crying because it's so pathetic, and I can't separate Julia from Doris, and her voice is so plaintive, and she seems so broken-hearted, poor child; and I can't persuade myself that it isn't true, that it's only pretence, and that the darling isn't really plunged deep into sorrow and suffering! But one thing is very certain, she's an amazing actress, quite amazing!"

It was certain, too, that Mr. Leveridge was a very prejudiced critic.

On the morning after the performance, I hastened to Doris's lodgings. I was very anxious to hear that she was none the worse for her exertions. I desired, too, to know what had become of M. Riel. I had fully expected to see him at the theatre on the preceding evening; but unaccountably enough, he had not appeared. It was strange that, on such an occasion, he should have been absent. I felt that something serious must have happened.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER III. A STORM IN A TEA-CUP.

THE next morning was sunshine after rain.

The young painter rose early, as became his profession. Indeed it would have been worse than a sin and a shame, it would have been positive discomfort, to lie in the truckle-bed in a sort of nondescript attic of The Five Adzes, when the sun was staring broadly in at the window-panes, and bringing in with the light an atmosphere that was half of carnations, half of stable. It was not more than five o'clock when Walter Gordon threw himself from under the horse-cloth or whatever it was that served for a blanket, and forced wide open the lattice window. It had assuredly never been opened since it was made. And, as the window flew open, he received all over his head and shoulders a bright and fragrant shower-bath from the dripping vine-leaves.

What in all the earth is sweeter than such mornings, when the rain-drops, though they still half-drown the roses, are like tears of joy? The rain had played havoc enough with the flower garden of The Five Adzes and the vegetable garden too; but cabbages and cabbage-roses alike were laughing at their own destruction. The house was not yet awake.

"I wonder how that singing woman fared in The Five Adzes," thought Walter, as he took another glittering shower-bath, with his hat off, under a plum-tree. "I have a shadowy sort of a next-morning-

feeling on me that she made fools of us all somehow last night—even the sexton. Fancy meeting Clari at a village public! I must get to the bottom of it all somehow; and I must improve the acquaintance. Not that it's hard to know her. I've seen her sort budding in Lindenheim. Irma would have made just such another, only—no; Irma would never have drunk beer out of a pewter. And to think I ever thought myself over head-and-ears in love with Irma! Well, we were a lot of young fools at Lindenheim, in the days when we were—old. I wonder where they all are now. We haven't done so very much, for all the geniuses that we were." He leant with his arms on a gate and watched a cow taking her breakfast; and somehow there seemed a sort of sentimental sympathy about the cow. "Yes; it is true, madam," he said to her. "You and I are alone now, but we have not always been. There is something in the air to-day like Lindenheim. I suppose it's because I've never been up so early since I was there, or had such a recollection of having drunk so much beer. It's a fine morning, madam; and I have no doubt the rain was good for something or other, except for Monsieur Prosper. I suppose you will be honoured this morning by providing, in conjunction with the pig and the hen, a breakfast for a prima donna. That will be something to tell your calves' calves, for a Laxton cow. I must draw your portrait, madam, and make a present of you to The Five Adzes. I must get in my hand for Lady Quorne. For you must know, madam, that, simple—I may say, shabby—as I stand here, I am on my way to a live countess's; think of that, madam. Such is art—last night, eggs and bacon;

to-night, ortolans and chambertin; to-morrow night—who knows? I'm not sure I don't prefer the eggs and bacon. I wonder if art is privileged to shooting-jacket and slippers at my Lord Quorne's. I wish the house would stir. There's something terribly hungry about the smell of roses. And that grass of yours makes me feel like—like—Nebuchadnezzar."

A man who talks so idly to a cow for the sake of company, is pretty sure to be heart-whole; and that being so, Walter Gordon was in the right mood to enjoy the luxury of that perfect morning. He presently vaulted over the gate, and increased his appetite by walking some half-dozen miles. And it was still early when he returned.

At the garden-gate he met the under-gamekeeper, carrying a monstrous cabbage-leaf—fresh and dewy, like all the rest of the morning—covered by another. The man bore it with as much tenderness as if it had been a child.

"Good morning," said Walter, taking out his pen-knife, and carefully cutting off the finest rose he could find in the land-lord's garden.

The gamekeeper was in a dilemma; instinct sent one of his hands towards his cap, but something rolling from between the cabbage-leaves warned him that politeness must yield to the safety of his burden. It was a strawberry.

Walter smiled. There were no strawberry-beds in the garden of The Five Adzes, and no doubt its habitué, the gamekeeper, knew that as well as he. Mademoiselle Clari was not to go without at least one simple luxury, after all.

"You seem to have got a fine lot of strawberries there," said Walter, "to judge from the specimen—the one on the ground, I mean."

"They would have been, sir, if the rain hadn't drowned 'em. But I thought the French lady might like a few—such as they be."

"Do you grow them yourself?"

"Bless you! no, sir. I've been a matter of ten mile out and back to get these here."

"Indeed?"

"They'd have been uncommon fine, to be sure, if it hadn't been for the storm. Some out of my lord's, be they."

"My lord's? Lord who?"

"Lord who, sir? No—why my Lord Quorne, to be sure."

"What—is Lord Quorne's place so near? Why, I might have been there myself, by

now. I thought it was a dozen miles away. So those strawberries are Lord Quorne's?"

"They're out of my lord's—leastway, out of my lord's gardener's. And he's a main good sort. He'll always do a good turn for me."

"One good turn deserves another, I suppose. I suppose you don't walk ten miles out and in after strawberries every day?"

"Well, no, sir. If it comes to that, I can't say I do."

"I suppose you want to lay your trophy at her feet with your own hands. Is the lady up yet?" he asked the girl who acted as chamber-maid, boots, waiter, and even as ostler. She had looked a good-tempered girl enough overnight, but did not look in harmony with the laugh of the morning—more especially as her eyes fell upon the cabbage-leaves.

"Oh, she's up, sir. And so's a bottle of ginger-pop with a gooseberry in."

The gamekeeper was not too stolid not to see where the girl's eyes fell; and he looked nearly as sheepish as when he had been called upon to sing.

"Allow me," said Walter Gordon, with the gravest politeness, handing her the rose. "I have walked all the way to the nearest rose-bush to gather it for you. It's out of my own garden—leastway, out of my own land-lord's garden, as my friend here would say."

"Oh, there's lots of roses for them that wants 'em. P'rhaps the French lady 'd like a rose—if a lady she is. I don't call her one."

"Why, what's the matter? What has she been doing now?"

"I don't say but what she don't like strawberries. There's lots like that sort of rubbish, without being ladies. Oh, I never heard tell of a lady sitting drinking and smoking, with a lot of men that ought to be at home with their wives—them that's got them. And them that hasn't are mostly fools."

"I've no doubt my friend here will take the hint. I'm sure he couldn't do better."

"Oh, I'm not meaning him. He may do what likes him, and 'twill like me."

"You mean the sexton?"

"The sexton!"

"Or me?"

"Them the cap fits, let 'em wear it," said the girl, making the most of her parting shot, and vanishing elsewhere.

"One night in a village—and already with all the hedgers and ditchers at her

feet, and all the women by the ears!" thought Walter Gordon. "It is a real comedy. Come, my man; never mind a breeze. What's her name—Peggy——"

"Jenny, sir," said the gamekeeper, with a hang-dog look on his honest face, and a sort of a sigh.

"Jenny—you will make it all right with a ribbon. Come and give mademoiselle your strawberries."

"P'r'aps, sir, you'd best take 'em in, if you wouldn't mind."

"No, no. That would never do. In the first place, I haven't walked ten miles for them. And in the second, you mustn't give way to Miss Jenny's whims. Come—I'll see that she only eats the strawberries; not you."

Mademoiselle Clari's breakfast was laid in the only available room—that is to say, in the sanded parlour, still reeking with the fumes of stale shag and last night's beer. And it was plain enough that something besides jealousy was at the root of Jenny's ill-humour. Temper is catching.

It was a downright thunder-cloud, with signs of lightning, that hung over the face of the prima donna. She was fiercely sullen, and swept the sand about with tragic dignity. What had happened? Even Walter Gordon paused before he ventured on a "Good morning."

"Ah, so it is you!" declaimed Mademoiselle Clari almost in recitative, or at any rate, in that rhythmic volume that marks southern anger—when, as now and then happens, it does not scream. "Perhaps you call this an auberge. It is a trap of brigands. Gran Dio! What place of horror is this—yes, of horror!"

"What is it? Is it anything I can help you?"

"P'r'aps the lady will accept of these here," said the gamekeeper, plucking up courage by the roots, so to speak, and addressing the enraged prima donna at second hand through Walter Gordon. "They'd have been finer but for the storm, but they're out of my——"

What evil genius could have driven him to speak just then?

"What have I to want with your strawberries, imbecile?" said the prima donna, with sublime scorn. "Take them away. I asked for no strawberries. It is because I do not want them, therefore you bring them. I ask for coffee, it is my life, et voilà! They bring me soot, monsieur."

Was this the same Clari who had last night won all hearts by her graciousness?

Walter was not particularly amused, but he could not keep from a smile at the rueful visage of his friend the gamekeeper, who had walked ten miles and offended his lady-love, and all in vain.

And yet, even in the midst of this storm in a coffee-cup, there was that about Clari which raised the elements of farce into the region of tragedy. A queen denouncing rebellion could have done no more; and in the effect it was impossible altogether to remember the cause. It was whim—caprice—but it was passion, intense and genuine. It made one speculate, a little uneasily, what the result would be if she had real cause for anger. Surely in that case there would be tragedy indeed.

Walter Gordon looked at the coffee-cup, which certainly did not look tempting.

"It is not good," he said sympathetically. "But, you know, one must always follow the custom of the country, mademoiselle. I only wonder that in Laxton you should get coffee at all."

"I have lived to fall among savages! They have only one chaise—one gig—and Prosper takes it and leaves me here. I sleep on a bed—O gran Dio!—I ask for coffee, they make me soot; and they comfort me with strawberries!"

Clearly there was nothing to be done. Walter nodded a hint of withdrawal to the gamekeeper, and threw open the window, a real comfort that did not seem to have occurred, with all her delicacy, to Mademoiselle Clari. It was her way, he began to think, to care only for the impossible—until it was gained.

She still paced up and down the room, exclaiming at intervals both in French and Italian, altogether heedless of the sunshine, perfumed with roses and carnations, that streamed in. He rang for his own breakfast. It was brought in by Jenny, who bounced in, banged down everything at once on the table, and bounced out again without a word. Last night it had been storm without and sunshine within; the atmospheric conditions were reversed to-day.

Still she marched backward and forward, with the train of her extravagant travelling costume sweeping and gathering all the sand, and worse, of the bar-parlour's next morning. Walter ate his eggs and bacon and drank his ale with a fine appetite, unobtrusively observing Mademoiselle Clari the while. And, as he observed her, there somehow dawned upon him a memory. He had never, till last night,

seen Mademoiselle Clari's eyes; and yet last night was not the first time that he had seen the eyes of Mademoiselle Clari.

Filled with fire as they were, they were yet more striking in their dark and yet luminous depth than ever; and they seemed connected in his mind—was it with Manchester? Paris? Oxford? Jena? Rome? Lindenheim? Surely, Lindenheim. And with Irma? Lotte?

Ah! where, then, had Celia March been all this while? He had not forgotten her; but then where were all the rest, either—"Where are the snows of yester-year?" Lindenheim was not famous for the endurance of love or friendship. Yester-year's snows melt as surely elsewhere as at Lindenheim; but they do melt more quickly there. Still, Celia had been Celia. She had touched a little bit of his heart, and not merely his fancy, during that long walk to Waaren and home again. And they had been friends. But he had never heard of her having made a career; he had not heard of her for years. It was strange, for, of all the Lindenheim students, he remembered her voice as having been the most promising, as well as the most beautiful. And now he remembered her eyes also. And he remembered also an old fancy of his, that, if they ever grew to be filled with passion, they would be strangely like—what he saw now.

Apart from her eyes and her tragic intensity of expression, anger, or sunlight, or both, did not improve the appearance of the *prima donna*. She certainly looked two full years older than the night before, and her complexion needed artificial light for its beauty. That, and the parlour, were the only things that did not share in the sparkling freshness of the sunshine after rain. That her personal toilette was not arranged very exquisitely was not to be expected under the circumstances. He himself had benefited more by his involuntary shower-baths than by any supply of water with which Jenny had supplied him; and he knew that foreign ladies do not require such large washing-basins as their English sisters. But he would have thought that, beside all other discomforts, the loss of a cup of coffee might well have been borne.

While he looked, however, the storm cleared away—not gradually, but in one instant. A gracious smile broke out all over her face, and left not one trace of a cloud behind. Walter Gordon was actually startled by the transition.

"You people of Laxton are so funny," she said, as she seated herself at the open window.

"Well, mademoiselle, we have our oddities. Perhaps we are vain of them."

"The song last night was too adorable."

"We consider it a very fine song."

"But how strange! You are of Laxton, and you have heard me—and you say at Vienna?"

"Is it so strange?"

"And you do not speak like the others—not at all."

"I suppose we all have our little mysteries, mademoiselle. For example, you are at Laxton. That is stranger than my having been at Vienna."

"Not at all. I come from the railroad, I was to be met, and I find I have mistook the day. There is all the wonder. What is yours?"

"Why I heard you at Vienna? Simply because I was there. You would not expect me to be there, and not hear you?"

"What did you hear me sing?"

"Lucrezia."

"Ah, that is a fine part for me! I can feel myself in tragedy. I am glad you heard me in Lucrezia. Only in Vienna it was always used to be spoiled. Do you like Waldmann?"

"Well——"

"You may tell the truth to me. I hate her. And she is a German. I hope you did not applaud Waldmann."

"Do you mean musical hatred or personal, mademoiselle?"

"How? I only know one kind of hate, I. It is all one."

"I should not like you to hate me, mademoiselle. I think I should be afraid. You made me think very much about Lucrezia, just now."

"Ah, the coffee? Yes; it annoyed me. I do not like to be put out in my ways. But that was nothing. That hurt nobody."

"I'm afraid there was one, though, whom you hurt very much indeed. I doubt if he will recover it all his days."

"No?"

There was a little eagerness in her tone, as if she was pleased.

"It was the singer of last night, you know. Poor fellow, he walked ten miles this morning only to get you some strawberries for your breakfast, and you would not look at them. And that hurt him. We keep feelings in Laxton, madame, though we don't keep coffee."

"Ah—I cannot bear to hurt feelings;

and of the poor—it is a shame. And he sang that song? And walked ten miles for me? Is it true?"

"Quite true."

"Here is my purse, monsieur. You know money. Give him what you will."

"H'm. I think—somehow—that he would prefer your taking the strawberries."

"Oh, I will eat them all. I cannot bear to hurt; it hurts me. Call him in. He has not gone?"

There was no mistaking her eagerness to heal the wounded feelings of the game-keeper. Walter Gordon went out to look for him, and found him, as he expected, not far from Jenny. He came in bashfully, but not quite so uneasily as before.

"You have brought me strawberries," said the prima donna with eager graciousness. "I did not know—I was annoyed. May I have them?"

The man coloured as red as fire.

"The strawberries, miss?" he stammered.

"Yes—I want them now."

"I'm—I'm uncommon sorry—miss, I am—but I thought you didn't care for them things, maybe—and so—well, I just gave 'em to Jenny. And so, you see, miss, she——"

"Ate them," said Walter Gordon, "and gave you the rose I gave her? I see. Well—such is constancy, mademoiselle. You see the proof of it in his buttonhole."

The keeper looked down at his own coat; and sure enough the rose was there.

BLUE-COAT BUMBLEDOM.

"I NEVER was more convinced of anything in my life," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat, who, with other members of the board of guardians, was debating with what penalty Oliver Twist's request "for more" should be visited. "I never was more convinced of anything in my life, than I am that that boy will come to be hung." The spirit of Bumble-dom may thrive elsewhere than in a workhouse school, and the sentiment of virtuous animosity against what Mr. Bumble called the "perwersity" of the poor starved wretches who insisted upon dying in the street, may possess a loftier court of enquiry than that convened to sit upon poor Oliver's preposterous demand. It would be irreverent and possibly unjust to compare the principles of the

investigation conducted by the four distinguished gentlemen nominated by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department, into the circumstances attending the death of a little blue-coat boy, and the general character of the institution at which he was educated, with the mode in which their proceedings were regulated by the board whose members were, according to Mr. Bumble, each of them, father and mother to the destitute orphans that came in their way. It cannot, however, be denied that between the results of the two inquisitorial methods there is a close resemblance. William Arthur Gibbs did not, indeed, in the sense in which the gentleman in the white waistcoat gave utterance to the prediction, "come to be hung." He saved the laws of his country, and their administrative and executive instruments, the trouble which the accomplishment of that prophecy would have involved. The child Gibbs did not "come to be hung," simply because he hanged himself.

Why he resorted to that desperate expedient; whether a system under which a boy of twelve does with premeditation slip a halter over his neck, and launch himself upon the invisible future, can be sound, or healthy, or worthy of its historic origin and traditions—these were the questions which three privy councillors—two of whom have been cabinet ministers—the Dean of the most distinguished society in the oldest and most famous university of England, and an enlightened member of parliament, who is the chief proprietor of the greatest newspaper in the world, and who, as politician and country gentleman, has done as much good as any other individual in his generation, were called upon to examine and to answer. If a body thus composed could not have been trusted to conduct its investigation in a strictly business-like manner, in the name of common sense, what body could? But the policy which they employed was calculated from the very first to alienate popular confidence and to awake suspicion. They set about their work, not as men whose duty it was to investigate a great scandal, without fear or without favour, in the clear light of day, but as if they were a species of Star Chamber, the first object of whose policy was inviolable and mysterious secrecy. If there be any institution in England which is, or which ought to be, a national one, it is Christ's Hospital. Had it been a country grammar school, the commissioners could not have addressed themselves to

their work in a method arguing a more imperfect idea of their responsibilities. Metropolitan vestries, to say nothing of parliamentary committees, admit the reporters of the daily press. Here were five gentlemen called upon to sift the cause of a horrible catastrophe, involving issues of the utmost moment to the English public, who elected, and who were permitted, to sit with closed doors. At last they have issued their report; they issued it, indeed, a few weeks ago. All that can be said is, that the document corresponds to the anticipations which, under such circumstances, we should have been led to form, and it is as unsatisfactory as was the mode of the enquiry itself. The conclusions to which it points are three in number. First, that the government of Christ's Hospital, though it has much improved of late years, is not yet quite perfection; secondly, that the authorities upon whom the task of government devolves—treasurer, warden, headmaster, masters, beadles, dames, monitors—were all of them as near perfection as possible; thirdly, that the boy Gibbs was an ill-conditioned, unruly, mendacious urchin, and that he hanged himself in a spirit of "perwersity," to spite the powers that be of Christ's Hospital in general, and a certain upper boy with whom he had specially to do in particular.

Never has the noble art of "how not to do it" been illustrated so completely as in the transactions of this commission. The official report which a commission, appointed by the cabinet of the day, issues is usually a more or less lucid and emphatic declaration of the opinion of the commissioners, based upon certain data, in the shape of the recorded testimony of witnesses, also included in the volume which contains that report. In the present case there is offered not even a précis of the examination of witnesses by the commissioners. No complete list is even given of the names of these witnesses; the commissioners state their own conclusions as to the death of the boy Gibbs and the existing state of things at the school in Newgate-street, and nothing more. Gibbs told his father and his sister that the life at school was utterly intolerable; that the tortures inflicted on him by some of his senior schoolfellows were so systematic and odious as to render life a burden which he could not support. It is clear that the commissioners have either—because they discovered that the dead boy's

word was not uniformly trustworthy—abstained from specially enquiring into this fact, or else that they have, for some reason of their own, declined to publish what the result of their enquiries on this point was. They content themselves with assuring us that the boy whose name has been unfavourably associated with that of Gibbs was all that a Christ's Hospital monitor should be; that he had high principles; and that, though he offended against the laws of the school, which forbid a monitor to strike another boy, his offence—both in degree, we suppose, and in kind—was sanctioned by custom. The commissioners have, as it seems to us, gone out of their way to assume a responsibility which is exclusive and invidious. The public wanted to be informed on certain specific facts, minutely and circumstantially. It did not want the mere *ipsi dixerunt* of five gentlemen of honour, irreproachable character, and immense experience. The issue, as has been said, was weighty, yet it was comparatively simple: Under precisely what combination of circumstances did the boy Gibbs come to hang himself? That issue is diligently avoided, and in lieu of grappling with it, or, at least, of proving unmistakably to all the world that they have grappled with it, the commissioners are satisfied with indicating grave faults in the organisation and management of Christ's Hospital, and suggesting remedies sufficiently drastic, indeed, but, at the same time, sufficiently obvious. The report is, in fine, a document after Mr. Bumble's own heart.

"Thank heavens," said an old Blue, writing to the newspapers the other day, "that the Christ's Hospital of my time has ceased to exist!" "I look back," almost simultaneously wrote another old Blue, "to my days at Christ's Hospital with gratitude, affection, and delight." Well, let us hope that the sentiments entertained and expressed by the letters of these two correspondents, are those which the retrospect most naturally excites. Yet there is too much to make us believe that the Christ's Hospital as it is even now, must cease to exist before it can be anything like the Christ's Hospital which ought to be. There is nothing in the perusal of the annals of the school, suggestive of that sense of picturesque relief which one experiences in turning over the records of all the other great schools of the country. Its traditions are ancient,

its associations venerable, but, like the costume of the scholars, they have little to commend them to the imagination, except the fact that they are old. The reminiscences of old Blues are confined to a limited and austere area, and are pent-up within hoary but gloomy precincts. The recollections of their school-days have none of those bright spots on which the memory in after years lovingly dwells. Coleridge and Lamb tell us of happy days spent when they wore the gown. But, they were spent not in the hospital, nor in any place connected with it; not in school, cricket-field, or playground; but in suburban expeditions to the leafy glades of Epping, or along the flowery banks of the Thames. Christ's Hospital has no playing-fields, has no kind of playground, except the dingy enclosure that is barred in from the dingy and narrow street. The Christ's Hospital boys do not play like other boys; they contract a dislike for such sports, as they cannot practise in the forlorn and forbidding palæstra attached to the establishment. School enjoyments, by the side of school discipline and studies, are unknown. There are the streets of the great City, with its endless roar, hard by, where they are sometimes free to wander. But as for the routine of school life, it is a round of joyless monotony; distasteful; frequently painful in actual experience; unattractive in the retrospect.

Even cheery Leigh Hunt fails to convince us that he had really any of that tenderness for Christ's Hospital which boys, when they have become men, do, as a matter of fact, not unfrequently feel for their old school. He writes a panegyric on it, but it is the sort of panegyric that might be expected from a man who writes to order: his praise is stiff, formal, unreal, forced. He speaks of it in conventional language, and in artificial periods, as the "most truly English foundation in the country—taking that word to mean what Englishmen wish it to mean—something solid, unpretending and free to all. . . Christ's Hospital is a nursery of tradesmen, of merchants, of naval officers, of scholars; it has produced some of the greatest ornaments of their time, and the feeling among the boys themselves is, that it is a medium between the patrician pretension of such schools as Eton and Westminster, and the plebeian submission of the charity schools." Now, this sort of writing has about it an unmistakable falsetto note, and generally it may be said that, except,

indeed, in some of the correspondence which recent proceedings have elicited, old Blues express themselves gratefully, rather than affectionately, as to the character of the institution at which they were educated. Coleridge's reminiscences of the place centre almost exclusively in the draconic headmaster of his youthful days, the Rev. James Boyer; an admirable teacher, but something more than a severe disciplinarian, and of whom Lamb writes: "Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the nylantes, and caught glimpses of Tartarus. . . I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips), with a 'Sirrah! do you presume to set your looks at me?' In his gentler moods, when the rabidus furor was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar to himself, of whipping a boy, and reading the debates at the same time—a paragraph and a lash between." To come to Charles Lamb himself, his first impressions at Christ's Hospital would, in all probability, only have been too readily endorsed by poor little William Arthur Gibbs.

"I was," writes Lamb, "a hypochondriac lad; and the sight of a boy in pillory, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terror of initiation. I was told that he had run away. This was the punishment for the first offence. As a novice, I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little square Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket, with a peep of light let in askance from a prison orifice. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter, who brought him his bread and water, who might not speak to him; or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude; and here he was shut up by himself of nights, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves and superstition incident to his time of life might subject him to."

Who shall say that this may not be a true description of the sufferings that the boy Gibbs endured on the night previous to the fatal morrow, during which he was confined alone in the school infirmary?

The matron says that the child eat an excellent breakfast before he carried out the self-ordained sentence. But there is surely nothing unusual in that. The child's mind, the alleged excellence of his appetite notwithstanding, may have been as full of terrors on that fatal morning, and through the hours of darkness which ushered it in, as that of the miserable creature who asks for a pint of beer, "which was immediately supplied him," before the final interview with Mr. Marwood.

But now what was the state of things, and what were the customs, which even the commissioners are compelled to admit were unsatisfactory at Christ's Hospital, while all the individuals concerned were blameless? This is almost the exact language of the report. Yet surely it involves something like a contradiction in terms. If the customs of Christ's Hospital result now and then in the suicide of a scholar, surely for this usage some definite persons are responsible—the beadles, the masters, or the governors. Not so, argue the gentlemen appointed by Mr. Cross to enquire into the matter. They lay the blame on what is really an abstraction. So recently as the time of Lamb and Coleridge the care bestowed upon the health and cleanliness, and as a rule, upon the education of the boys, was scandalously insufficient. The great reforms which are the modern boast of the institution date from 1856. The picture of Christ's Hospital, as it is given us by the commissioners, may be accepted as true in every respect. The foundation provides board and education for about eight hundred boys. About twenty-five of these boys are Grecians or deputy Grecians—lads of the age of sixteen and upwards, selected according to merit, and educated for the universities. The maximum age of the other boys is fifteen, scholars being transferred from the school at Hertford to the school in Newgate-street, at the age of twelve. From the mass of the senior scholars—those verging on the advanced age of fifteen—the monitors are chosen, and to them such power as the masters can give is delegated. Till a few years ago there was no head-master at Christ's Hospital. Even now the head-master is an official who exists only in name. Formerly entitled grammar-master, he is responsible for the industry and the behaviour of the boys in school. The warden has the sole charge

of them out of school hours, and is assisted in the work of supervision by beadles and porters. Over and above both warden and head-master, is the treasurer; who not only has a handsome residence on the premises, receives, disburses, and accounts for all moneys belonging to the institution, is chairman of all committees, his voice having more weight at their proceedings than that of anyone else, but acts in every respect as the resident-governor of the hospital, and is the managing director of the fifty gentlemen who compose the committee of almoners. This committee is that of the supreme governing body of the school, chooses and dismisses the head-master and his assistants, and is the ultimate tribunal of appeal on all points. There are sixteen sleeping wards, in which order is kept by a matron, with two monitors to help her; a Grecian in most instances being held in reserve, to interfere as a *deus ex machina* if any special disturbance should arise. To sum up: the monitors are the only connecting link between the authorities of the school-room and the authorities of the playground and sleeping-wards. They are recognised by the masters, and are recognised also by the warden, matron, and beadles. The law prohibits the infliction by them of corporal punishment on the boys who form the rank and file of the school, but custom sanctions it, and the opinion of the commissioners is that the custom must be allowed. For the rest, there is something worse and more confusing than any mere system of dual government. The head-master conflicts with the warden, and both are really responsible to the treasurer. The warden and treasurer may be, and according to the commissioners have recently been, quite exemplary. But when the boys are out of school, they are either turned into the dismal playground, or into the London streets. At this stage the authority of Mr. Bumble supervenes. The beadles treat them, not as lads who may and should some day or other grow up to be English gentlemen, but as charity boys. The commissioners are not quite enamoured of the beadle system, but so long as the school is in London they do not see their way to recommend its abolition.

This is not the first time that the transfer of the hospital from the heart of London has been suggested. In 1870 a proposal for it was negatived, in a court of one hundred and forty governors, only by fourteen votes. It is quite clear that,

under its present local conditions, with no cricket-field, football-field, or river, Christ's Hospital, being exclusively a boarding-school, can never be conducted decently, and is sure to continue a hotbed of bullying of the worst description. Let the governors of Christ's Hospital seriously ponder, not only the recommendation of the commission, but the example of the Charter House, which flourishes apace in the new home at Godalming. Further, if a correspondent of *The Times*, writing under date August 14, is correct, the governors might actually find purchasers for their present site in Newgate-street. But there are other matters to settle besides the future habitat of the school, or the possibility of abolishing the beadles. The monitorial system, as it exists at Christ's Hospital, is utterly rotten, and must either be reconstructed, or else reformed off the face of the earth. To connive, as the authorities of Christ's Hospital, according to their own showing, do connive, at a state of things under which small boys of fourteen and fifteen maul and maltreat each other, is to give a charter to sheer cruelty, and to encourage abuses which exist in no other school in England. At Eton there is fagging—the power to fag being confined to the sixth and the fifth forms—though public opinion, as well as physical experience, is reducing the asperity of the fag system every day. As for the monitorial system, it can only be said to be recognised at Eton in a very qualified shape, the captain of each house being honourably expected by the head-master to keep things straight; and in theory or practice, a certain moral responsibility attaches to every member of the sixth form. At Harrow the monitorial system is in full force, and with its results there we may have something to say on another occasion. At Winchester a prefect may cane on his own responsibility. At Westminster no caneing can be inflicted without the power of the head-boy of the house. These are all of them varieties of that monitorial régime which was elaborated by Arnold of Rugby, with a view first to teach boys habits of manliness, independence, and honesty, by permitting them to govern themselves; secondly, to prevent bullying, by specifying and defining the power which boys should exercise over each other. With a man of Arnold's influence and force of character, and with upper boys such as he contrived to manufacture, the prefectorial

scheme may perhaps be trusted to work well. In a general way there is not much to be said for it; and the school in which it is formally dispensed with—Eton—is, for its size, the most humane of all.

But it is not necessary to go into any lengthy arguments on this more general feature in public-school discipline, to be assured that the apology for the monitorial system, which events have brought to light in Christ's Hospital, is wholly and solely bad. The first thing is to transplant the entire establishment some thirty or forty miles out of London; to abolish the beadles; to make the head-master supreme over all, and to make him, and him alone, independently of treasurer or president, answerable for the education and the discipline of the school. If prefectorial power in any shape is to be exercised, it should be exclusively vested in the Grecians; and the monitors, as they now are, must be clean swept away. Fresh air, healthy surroundings, the opportunities of cheering pastimes and invigorating games, the consciousness of a corporate life out of school as well as in it, a life in which every boy will not be as an Ishmaelite with his hand against his fellow—these are the first essential conditions to which Christ's Hospital must be accommodated. As matters are, a noble institution is dominated by the despotic spirit of Bumbledom, and until that evil genius is exorcised, the school must be impotent for half the good which it should effect.

A CHAPTER ON SILK.

THE two Greek monks who, hiding a handful of silkworms' eggs within the hollow of a cane, eluded the lynx-eyed officers of the Chinese custom-house, and robbed the Flowery Land of its most cherished monopoly, could hardly have known how immense was the boon which their evasion of the revenue laws conferred upon the Roman Empire of the East. Previous to this act of pious smuggling, Europe, Persia, and even India were dependent on the pigtailed producers of Kathay for every pound of the raw material. Pagan Rome, like Tyre or Persepolis, had to be content with such silk as the monsoons enabled Moormen and Gentoos to carry in their square-sailed craft from the Yellow to the Red Sea.

The small store of the silken seed which the Greek monks brought home

proved fruitful exceedingly, and presently Constantinople, not Canton or Nankin, became the centre of the silk-trade and the chief seat of what speedily rose to the dignity of a national industry. Thrace and Hellas, the Ionian provinces of Asia Minor, and, above all, Cyprus and Syria, possessed a climate admirably suited to the new cultivation, and to the growth of the mulberry-tree. They had, too, the advantage of a numerous population of gentle, patient workers, well fitted to make the most of this novel source of wealth.

For hundreds of years Byzantine silk was as well known in the marts of East and West as that of Lyons is now. The inroads of the Turk, and of barbarous invaders, Avar, Oghur, and Bulgar, less known than the Turk, gradually dried up the well-springs of prosperity. Every year saw a lessening of the area of cultivation, a diminution in the number of buyers, as fertile lands were laid waste, and fair cities plundered, until at last the headquarters of silk production were in the Lebanon, out of reach, for awhile, of the Paynim robber.

Silk, like tobacco, had to face what might be called the personal hatred of enemies who were in a position to give practical effect to their antipathy. The Gothic conquerors, such as Alaric, had taken to it kindly enough. But the fierce Attila proscribed it, and the rulers of Islam denounced it with a Puritanic fervour of bitter contempt. The austere Caliph Abubekr ordered such Moslems as were strutting in silken garb—part of the "loot" of captured Greek towns—to be rolled ignominiously in the mire, as unworthy believers. Grim Omar's footstool was not to be approached by Emir or Kaimakam, glistening in the effeminate robes from the Syrian loom. But fashion, as usual, got the better of sumptuary laws, and silk was soon in as high demand in Bagdad or Cairo, as ever it had been in Christian Antioch or Damascus.

Singularly enough, sericulture was not an art which commended itself to the wealthy and industrious Italy of the Middle Ages, and that in spite of the fact that Milan, Mantua, and Florence supplied half Christendom with holiday clothes. Lombard and Tuscan weavers looked to the Orient for silk, as they looked to England and Spain for wool. Mulberries were planted in Italy, as they were planted in France, by some exceptionally far-sighted prince or statesman,

but the systematic rearing of silkworms dates from a period more recent than that which saw the great city commonwealths flourishing in their free splendour.

As the steadiness of the demand called into being fresh sources of supply, and as France grew larger and more powerful, the once Imperial town of Lyons began to claim a silken precedence.

From the earliest dawn of the Renaissance the silk manufacture had been, with French kings, a petted industry. Shrewd, sordid Louis the Eleventh tried to make Tours rival Pisa. Superb Francis the First desired that the Gallic shuttle, as well as the Gallic spear, should conquer the foreign competitor. And, Free Trade being as undreamed of as the steam-horse and the electric wire, the manufactures of aliens were very heavily handicapped by protective duties, while France learned to dress, no longer in the Spanish or the Italian, but distinctively in the French style. We in England, who reared no worms and carded no silk, were not debarred by national jealousy from dealing with the foreigner.

It needs an effort to carry our minds back to the time, when the Spitalfields weaver was a new institution in the land, and Bethnal-green but lately colonised by immigrants from France. The blind bigotry of Louis the Fourteenth had driven into exile thousands of skilled workmen, and England was eager to profit by the influx of French Protestants. To London came the Cevennes peasant, dragooned out of house and home for the crime of attending a conventicle; the Lyons weaver, who had risked the galleys for conscience' sake; the Huguenot mill-owner, smarting under fine and imprisonment. And it was really believed that Spitalfields, and Macclesfield, and Coventry, and Nottingham might outstrip France in that branch of industry which then seemed the most distinctively French.

Some ill luck, however, blighted, almost from the first, the effort to establish a thriving manufacture of English silken goods. The raw material was dear; there were no British silkworms to feed the looms of London and Cheshire; Lyons far excelled Spitalfields in capital, taste, and skill. It was in vain that a sympathetic House of Commons acceded to the saddling of foreign products with additional dues. Even in the heat of the wars that rarely slackened, Mr. William Watch and his compeers contrived to

defraud both the King's exchequer and the British silk-weaver, by delivering, duty free, French goods that had never been subjected to the formality of a Customs' examination.

Meanwhile hostile tariffs and chronic misgovernment had reduced the production of Italian silk to very moderate proportions. In Asia the same causes were at work. Samarcand no longer sent its costly bales to Europe. Cities, once resounding with the hum and click of beam and shuttle, were now heaps of owl-haunted ruin. Genghis and Timour left few living witnesses of their triumphant march, and either slaughtered artisans wholesale, or transplanted them to far-off settlements in the Steppes. Petty tyrants gleaned where these illustrious destroyers had plied the scythe, and the Venetian wharves were no longer encumbered by merchandise from the dusky East. The direct commerce with China was difficult and tardy; Italy sank yearly deeper into a slough of sloth and superstition, and all things seemed to point to a French monopoly of the silk trade.

"To make a civet," says the homely French proverb, "we want a hare;" and to manufacture ribbons, and rich brocade, and bright taffety, and shimmering satin, and substantial poult de soie, we require the silkworm, and the silkworm's eggs, the promise of a new harvest. A delicate creature is the silkworm, and one impossible to rear, save under favourable sanitary conditions. He must be kept warm. He must have plenty of pure air. His diet must be cared for with lavish assiduity. Too much care cannot be taken to keep him clean; to shield him from hot sun and cold wind, from damp, from bird and insect; to avoid overcrowding; and to ensure gentle usage and discreet management for the infant worm. He must have fresh leaves to eat, a ventilated dwelling, a nicely-regulated temperature, if you would have him thrive; and even then he remains a tender thing, that a breath may kill.

The fragile nature of the silkworm, and the difficulty of prolonging the life of the creature from the nursery epoch until the proud day when its silken shroud is self-spun, and its larva condition at an end, has often occasioned both philosophers and practical men to seek for a harder substitute. The silkworm is not the only silk producer. Sundry caterpillars, and many spiders, when properly fed, furnish silk at will, and the webs of the great

birdcatching Arachnidæ of South America, for instance, are superior in strength and texture to the smoothest cocoons which the pampered and tender Bombyx can supply. The ferocity of the spider, however, proved fatal to all attempts to turn a penny by converting Arachne into a spinning-jenny. One patient projector collected a grand army of four thousand spiders, but the ingenious Amazons devoured one another, and soon but a few remained alive. And then it requires twelve female spiders to do the work of one silkworm, and twenty-seven thousand would be required to yield a pound of silk.

At Lyons and Montpellier efforts have been made to get rid of the silkworm, as an obnoxious middleman, altogether, and to extract his shining thread directly from the fibre of the mulberry leaves and bark. And these efforts obtained a qualified scientific, if not a commercial, success. The mulberry-tree, properly invoked, will give us silk, without our being under any obligation to the worm. But the process is troublesome, and the silk ligneous, of poor colour, and in short lengths. Another bold inventor took out a patent for cast silk, dissolving, spreading, and drying the rough raw material, so as to save the price of machinery and the wages of the operative; but his partial triumph, also, ended in pecuniary failure. In the present state of science we cannot dispense with the services of worm or weaver.

No domestic animal fattens so rapidly as the silkworm. Give him his choice, and he will prefer the lettuce to even the white mulberry, as he likes the white leaves better than the red, and the red leaves better than our common English black. Lettuce leaves, however, imply a whiter and weaker silk, and a deficiency of healthy silk moths and the invaluable eggs. The leaf of the white mulberry, which does not suit our soil and climate, is the true food of the true silkworm. In warm countries it is not indispensable that he should spend his little life in a house. A mulberry grove will harbour a vast population of the crawling alchemists, that turn vegetable fibre into sheeny silk. But such a grove needs careful netting, to protect the toothsome white tid-bits from the beaks of birds; while it is difficult to collect the cocoons, and a single thunder-shower or dust-storm means ruin to the harvest.

The magnificent silk-farms of North Italy show the domesticated silkworm at his best. In these great nurseries

the worm is watched over with unremitting care, from the moment when, a tiny black thread, he chips the shell, until, a corpulent mass of waddling whiteness, he leaves off eating, and clothes himself in the golden sheathing of the many-threaded cocoon. The noise made by the many thousand worms, as they browse on the fresh-picked leaves, has been not inaptly compared to that caused by grazing sheep, while scores of spindles are ever busy in reeling off the yellow film that is the future grist for the silk-mills of Lyons, Genoa, and Lombardy. Unfortunately, for some quarter of a century past, the silkworm farms of France and Italy have been scourged by a malady, akin to the oidium in vines and to potato disease, under the influence of which the worms sicken and perish by millions.

No care, no isolation, seems to act as a permanent protection to a silkworm colony against the dreaded "pebrine," a disease of fungoid origin, which in a day blights the hopes of a year, and from which, according to the most careful researches of M. Pasteur, few eggs escape without the hereditary taint which will perpetuate the distemper.

Longing eyes were turned towards the native countries of the silkworm—China and Japan—where epidemic disease was unknown, and whence a new and vigorous race of worms might be brought to fill the room of the degenerate Bombyx of Europe. And, as European potato-growers imported fresh seed from Equatorial America, so did the Silk-growers' Association of Northern Italy look to the far East for the means of restocking their silkworm-nurseries, depopulated by pebrine. The telegraph flashed to Japan a royally liberal order for a hundred thousand pounds' worth of silkworms' eggs, and in due commercial course, via San Francisco, the precious cargo was despatched, eggs and cases turning the scale at the imposing weight of twenty-eight tons. This, it must be remembered, represents but one, although the largest, of the purchases thus made. Times have changed, certainly, since the missionary monks slipped out of China, trembling, with their few poor scores of eggs hidden in the hollow cane!

All manufactures have a tendency, after reaching the culminating point, to decline, and silk has been no exception to the rule. The immensely greater cost of the raw material, brisk competition, and the high wages requisite for the workmen's main-

tenance in times so hard, have been met in part by labour-saving machinery, in part by a perhaps necessary rise in price, and thirdly, it is to be feared, by an unscrupulous system of adulteration.

It is quite as easy, nowadays, to find pure wine, as to meet with unsophisticated silk. And, as we drink drugged sherry and doctored claret, as we eat our beef with mock mustard, and whet our jaded appetite with pernicious pickles, so do our wives and daughters pay heavy bills for nominal silk. Real taffetas or glacé, the material of which costs avowedly thirty per cent. more than that of the thick and imposing failles and gros grains, is sedulously kept in the background at Messrs. Cash and Squander's emporium. If asked for, it is slightly pronounced "old-fashioned," and unworthy of a customer's attention. What finds favour with the linen-draper is a stiff, solid, dull fabric, that must blush to hear itself proclaimed as brocade at ever so much a yard, and into the composition of which there enters much cotton and a little wool.

It is not the gown-piece alone which is a pretender to a style and title unjustly usurped. Ladies may sigh for the honest silk stockings which their grandmothers bought for a third of what Blandish and Co., the eminent outfitters, now charge for an inferior article. Skeins and reels do not comprise the good measure, and strong, bright thread, that they used to do. Scarf, and ribbon, and handkerchief, and necktie, are too often expensive impostors, with no fair claim to derive their pedigree from the silkworm. The very worst, as well as the very best, of silks now come to us from France, and, as chambers of commerce have more than once pointed out, there are certain qualities of silken goods still manufactured in England, the superior purity of which, were they but known, would ensure them a ready sale on the Continent itself.

FOUNTAIN VIOLET.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

GRACE is a sweet name. I have been always curiously fond of Grace. A trio of sisters thus called, popular in antiquity, were no less distinguished for personal attractions than for purity of life and manners. At the state-balls of Olympus, of which they were among the chief ornaments, there is reason to infer that these young ladies, eschewing the chaperonage of their mother, Madame Venus, whose

visiting-list was mixed and comprehensive, or of their father, Signor Bacchus, whose too-convivial habits occasionally gave uneasiness to his friends, placed themselves under the protection of the ladies Diana and Minerva; and thus, with the powerful safeguard of innocence and wisdom, braved in security the social perils of the time.

Modern history has chimed in melodiously with the records of old. Observe that, in mediæval times, little is heard of any Graces. They withdraw into a modest shade. It is a circumstance that tells immensely in their favour. Your true Grace was a flower too pure and delicate for the parterres of that garish day. Only when the painted and bedizened queens of the garden were swept from the scene, did the Graces re-open their tender-lidded leaves to the sun, and steal back, lovelier than ever, into the welcoming world.

And well have the Graces since vindicated their claim to popular esteem. I fearlessly appeal to all accessible archives in proof of what I allege. How faithful is every Grace, usually, to the traditions of her name! How rarely have we to deplore the coming to serious grief of one so sweetly called! Was ever Grace divorced, except, peradventure, from a lunatic lord? Has society once had to blush for a kleptomaniac Grace? Doth she smoke, or tipple? Is she beheld gloating over the doveicides of Hurlingham, or heard lamenting that her sex (large as is its present latitude) forbids that pastime in which horses' shins are battered, their mouths spoiled, their tempers ruined, and the laws for their supposed protection openly violated, under the name of Polo? Never. Where Grace is, cruelty and self are not. Love, peace, charity, inseparably companion her, and all these are comprehended in her delicious name.

Grace Darling was an appellation worthy of the young heroine who bore it. But when I changed Grace Fairlocks (which became the wearer well) into Grace Sweetlove (which became her better), I flatter myself that, in point of melody, Miss Darling had to yield the palm.

The espousals of Gratia Fairlocks and myself, Adolphus Sweetlove, could not be stigmatised as mercenary. Neither of the contracting parties coveted the other's wealth. Let me be frank. We had, between us, no money at all, or less. For albeit Miss Fairlocks enjoyed a net income of one hundred and thirty pounds a

year, she had impignorated that revenue for three years to come, in consideration of an immediate payment of two hundred and twenty, for the sole purpose, it would appear, of losing this latter sum in a certain undertaking which, on the eve of floating triumphantly into the market, stuck in the mud, and that of so clinging a character, that the directors are not, to this day, purged of the consequences of the immersion.

My own pecuniary resources were even less ample than Grace's. I was, to own the truth, slightly in debt, and, at the epoch of my marriage, I had at my command just thirty-five pounds sterling! For the better comprehension of the following singular tale, I must recur, very briefly, to the circumstances of my ante-nuptial life.

On the death of my parents, which occurred during my absence on service in India, I found myself in the somewhat unusual position of scarcely possessing a blood relation in the world. I could, indeed, boast (but rarely did) of an uncle, my mother's only brother, Mr. Lewcraft. But this gentleman, for all legitimate avuncular ends, might as well have flourished in another age.

Mr. Lewcraft's country seat, Fountain Violet, was perched upon a bleak hill, overlooking the entrance of a western harbour, renowned in past days for sending forth many a hardy mariner, sometimes to defy his country's foes, sometimes its excise, for the very formation of the rocky sea-face, and the character of the adjacent country, marked it out as a spot expressly designed by the foresight of nature for an important "run."

Wherefore "Fountain Violet" no man knew. Fountain there was none; nor even a hedge or bank on the wind-swept down under which a violet could nestle. The edifice itself was, as to its outside, low-browed and forbidding; as to its interior, dark and draughty, full of echoes, strange wind-whistles, and melancholy croaking sounds, as if the aged mansion, conscious of a tendency to collapse, were debating with itself whether it should try yet another tussle with Time.

My uncle had acquired this cheerful property for a very moderate sum; the mansion, in addition to its other attractions, having the reputation of being haunted. Mr. Lewcraft was understood not to discountenance this rumour. Owing, it was whispered, to some grievous wrong or disappointment in early life, the lord of

Fountain Violet lived the life of a misanthrope, and was more than suspected of being a miser too.

An avenue of stunted limes, representing almost the only vegetable life of the domain, communicated with a narrow path winding down the cliff, and ending in a little sheltered cove just within the harbour's mouth, of a size sufficient to contain any vessel up to a hundred tons. Herein lay the link that still connected Mr. Lewcraft with the outer world. He had always loved the sea, and wooed it in all its changeful moods with the serene indulgence of a lover. From a harbour punt he had proceeded to a stout fishing wherry, and at length became the master of a splendid forty-five-ton cutter yacht, now snugly berthed in the little natural harbour just described.

On board this vessel my uncle was known to spend the greater part of his very ample leisure. What he did there, even at times when it was manifestly impossible to put to sea, was a subject of much speculation to the seafaring youth of the neighbourhood, who, weatherbound themselves, devoted their idle hours to vain efforts to penetrate the proceedings of the "Ogre," for by that agreeable title was the lord of Fountain Violet popularly known, partly from his mysterious prowling ways, partly from the fact that the unsparing dentist, Time, had, with cruel pleasantry, punched out every alternate tooth in Mr. Lewcraft's head, thereby imparting to his countenance an aspect of greed and ferocity.

Work of some sort was at all times going on in the Cockatoo. Gossip affirmed that Mr. Lewcraft had conceived a theory connected with the stowage of ballast, which, when perfected, would be likely to work a complete revolution in that essential feature. His table at Fountain Violet was known to be strewn with models, sketches, diagrams, calculations, all bearing upon the point in question. But the nature of the invention, or discovery, was inexorably confined to the proprietor himself, and to a certain shaggy old sea-dog of morose manners, who had obtained his discharge from the coast-guard to take command of the Cockatoo.

I think I have only to add that my uncle's modest establishment, at this period, consisted of an aged cook, believed to have no other name than Louisa (by the itinerant fish merchants, with whom she occasionally drove hard bargains,

roughened into "Squeezer"), and a younger lady who did the meaner chares, and was, thanks to her prodigious stature but scraggy form, familiarly accosted as Maypole Moll.

I fly back, on Love's own wings, to my Grace.

Our formal betrothment, I would here record, took place at the theatre, during a scene in which Mr. Irving (for whom, though I don't know him, I have ever since cherished a warm personal attachment), in a brisk conversation with one Lady Anne, dwelt strongly on the expediency of a sudden and definite engagement. We felt the justice of his arguments, we gazed in each other's eyes, we returned to our respective homes affianced.

Now arose the question of means. At a cabinet council, held in the beautiful gardens of the Star and Garter, Richmond, the budget was exhaustively discussed. Grace and I agreed upon that fusion of our joint possessions known among lawyers as "hotchpot." The expression is happy. It has a cheerful, domestic, simmering sound, as if in happy augury that, come what may, we should never want a dinner. Our spirits rose in proportion. Strong in our genial hotchpot, we should bid defiance to poverty, hunger, and all the lesser ills of the unprovided flesh. Into this dainty little dish each was to dip at pleasure, and to repeat the process until all was gone, except twenty pounds, reserved for our marriage-trip.

There was a sweet and trustful disregard of business in this arrangement, quite in keeping with our frame of mind, and it brought its own reward. If you could have seen my little blushing Gracie's half-arch, half-mournful appeals to the money-box! It was as a sacred shrine, which nothing would have induced her to approach in my absence. Could tills be opened in such bewitching fashion, and five-and-sixpence be extracted by such fairy fingers, I doubt much if any injured proprietor could find it in his heart to invoke the outraged laws. When I discovered that all was gone, save the twenty pounds agreed on, I could hardly regret that the preparation of Gracie's trousseau had left nothing at all for mine.

"Only twenty sovereigns!" sighed Grace, placing those coins on the table, a long way apart, and then weighing each individually on her rosy finger-tip, as if in the vague

hope that one or other, proving to be above weight, might be persuaded to go farther.

"True. That will hardly suffice," I remarked, studying Bradshaw. "By the way, love, have you determined whither we are to fly from the world's gaze?"

"Oh, Dolly, not too far. The money, love—you see!"

"It's the money, love, I don't see, that perplexes me," I replied gloomily. "Some quiet little haunt, not, as you say, too far, yet far enough to enable us to forget that there is any world but that we carry with us. Have you any idea, Miss Fairlocks?"

Gracie hesitated.

"I thought of C—C——"

"Cornwall?"

Gracie uttered a little scream.

"Cornwall—you silly boy! Nonsense. Camberwell."

"Camberwell," I repeated, "by all means; unless, indeed, your ladyship would prefer the solitudes of Wapping! No, love; you have unintentionally decided me. We go to Cornwall."

"But, Dolly, that's the Land's End!"

"It's its only fault," I said apologetically. "The shores are lovely; the living excellent. It rains only four days a week. The Botallack mine is worth the journey, and so is a little white turnip, which refuses, I am told, to grow anywhere but at Marazion. As for the money," I added, recklessly; "pshaw, you'll see!"

Experience had taught me that these last two words, pronounced with authority, exercised an almost magical influence over my fair companion.

"Don't you think, Adolphus," asked Grace, presently, "that it would be only kind to inform your uncle, Mr. Lewcraft, of our little plan?"

"If, by 'little plan,' you allude, Miss Fairlocks, to the trifling incident of my intended marriage, I see no particular objection, save that ink is expensive, and, having now to consider——"

"Now, be serious; how often, in the course of your life, have you written to this gentleman—your sole relation, sir?"

"Repeatedly," was my bold reply.

"How often?" persisted my cross-examiner.

"Hem!—thrice."

"What did he answer to the first letter?"

"Nothing."

"To the second?"

"My sole relation continued mute."

"To the last?"

"Mr. Lewcraft forbore reply."

"Adolphus," said Grace, after a little pause, "to oblige me, try him once more."

"It won't come," I responded, gloomily.

"What won't come?"

"The cheque, love."

"As if I had been thinking of that!" said Gracie, tossing back her glistening locks—ringlets, bless them, were in fashion then. "But write."

We did write—we—for it was a joint effort of authorship, Gracie suggesting the matter, and I the stops; result, a pretty and catching composition, finished off with an ingenious interlacing of those names about to become one.

Grace felt confident that Mr. Lewcraft would incontinently reply, perhaps welcome us to Fountain Violet, and embrace the earliest opportunity, when alone with me—most likely over a bottle of fine old port as crusty as the owner—to say, "My dear boy, here's to you and your sweet little wife. Dolly, we have been too long estranged. Henceforth, be this your home, and, my dear fellow, regard yourself as my heir!"

Without being quite so sanguine, I was certainly conscious of a faint hope, that the step we had announced to him might strike some long-silent chord in the heart of the solitary old man, which might tend to unite us more closely for the future.

An answer did arrive. On the fourth morning, I found on my breakfast-table a letter sealed with family arms, and large enough to have contained marriage settlements, or, at least, drafts of the same. Could my uncle have been so generous? Venerable relative—much misunderstood! The impost demanded by the postal authorities had been twopence, an excess into which Mr. Lewcraft must have been betrayed on no slight grounds. Impatient as I was, I determined that Gracie should be the first recipient of the news, and hurried off, breakfastless, to her home. My darling's eyes sparkled like sapphires, as they lit on the imposing seal. With a glance of timid triumph she tore it open. Out dropped a neatly-folded sheet of thick cartridge-paper, such as is occasionally used for folding up tobacco. Blank? Not quite. In the centre of a page appeared, in my uncle's crabbed characters, his nuptial blessing:

"More fools you!"

"Old br——"

A soft hand stopped my mouth.

"Br—other of my mother, I was about to say," I stammered through the white obstacle; "little do you know, mistaken man, what a niece you have rejected."

Taking Gracie in the first moments of this disappointment, I managed to convince her that the best rejoinder we could make to my uncle's manifesto would be our immediate espousals. Why, in effect, delay? Our minds were made up. There were no wills but our own to consult. By a skilful financial measure, the details of which are not the reader's concern, I managed to augment our travelling means to an amount sufficient for a month's trip. Thus all was arranged.

The ceremony was unpretending. The pew-opener, a very motherly person, who was taking snuff in a side-aisle when detailed for parental service, attended my bride to the altar. The beadle was my best man, and, apart from a slight aroma of beer, I could have desired no better. Thus I carried off my prize.

With a foresight suggested by the frugal mind, we had resolved to assume the demeanour of persons long, and, if possible, not quite happily, married. That experiment, or part of it, had, we knew, been attempted before, and seldom with marked success, hotel-bills, with few exceptions, being found to remain at high nuptial pressure. Nevertheless, we hoped, with a little previous rehearsing, to overcome all difficulties. "Dolly," was to be for the nonce a dormant title—"Mr. Sweetlove," "Adolphus," and, at times, "My dear," taking its place. "Grace," which I confessed my inability to pronounce in any but a suspiciously-tender tone, was to be changed to "Honorina," a sonorous name, and susceptible of a stern, not to say rebukeful intonation.

We even sketched out a slight quarrel or so.

"Waiter, this soup is excellent. It is served hot. I wish, Mrs. Sweetlove, I could pay the same compliment to the soup at home!"

"Oh, Do—hem, Mr. Sweetlove—how can you say so? Don't I know how particular you are? Do I ever neglect a single thing that concerns your comfort?"

"Seeing, my dear, that you enjoy at least an equal share of my 'comforts,' I am at a loss to perceive the merit of the sacrifice!" sneers the unkind husband.

"I am accustomed to such replies, and disregard them. Will you have some fish?"

"Honorina!"

"My dear! Command yourself. The servants."

"Some fish. Waiter, you needn't stop. Strange, Mrs. Sweetlove, that in all these years you have never learned respect and obed— Oh, you darling!" For the waiter had vanished; yet, alas! undecieved; for, if such a phenomenon as an internal wink be physically possible, in that man's eye I saw it.

"If you had gone on a moment longer, Dolly dear, I feel I should have cried," remarked one of the parties to this reprehensible dispute.

"Honorina!"

"Call me so again, when we're alone, and I'll come and pinch you," said Grace the shrew.

I am not going to describe our pleasant wanderings. Ah, happy, happy days! But for that inexorable law which prohibits marrying for the first time more than once, how often would we renew the blest experience!

At the end of three weeks, certain symptoms in our money chest seemed to suggest the expediency of deciding upon our future course, hitherto only vaguely referred to as an intention to return to London and "buckle to."

"If my figures be correct," I observed to my wife, after some certain calculations, "we may take another week, and arrive, Mrs. Sweetlove, in the metropolis, with sufficient resources to defray a cab to—well, say anywhere within the four-mile radius—and there commence our career of usefulness with—let me see—yes—exactly fifteen shillings."

Grace appeared to regard this prospect as, on the whole, rather satisfactory.

"Remember, dearest," she observed, cheerfully, "that in less than two years and a half we shall be rich. I regain my income, you know."

"In which interval," I said, with another hasty calculation, "our existing means will supply us with, for the first two years, something under one farthing a day, for the succeeding half-year, nil! Hang this fifteen shillings! I disdain the provision. It pays no interest. As capital it is insufficient. Far better rely upon that hardy nothing, whose every step must of necessity be in the direction, at least, of affluence."

"Dolly dear, how clever you are!" exclaimed Gracie. "I never thought of that before!"

"You'll see," I answered, confidently. "Courage, pet. Have we not read of another couple who, like ourselves, quitted their brief paradise, and bravely confronted the outer world, with pockets as empty as our own? Few," I continued, "are without a weapon of some sort wherewith to fight the battle of life. I, for example, though I have sheathed my sword, have still another instrument—my pen."

"Pen, love!" echoed Grace, opening her blue eyes.

"Pen, dear," I repeated, slightly ruffled. "Why this amazement? It is an object in familiar use."

"Not with you, dear!" retorted Mrs. Sweetlove, saucily. "I never saw you write but once. That was in the travellers'-book, at Penzance. I looked at it afterwards, to correct the misspelling."

"Hon——"

"Call me Honoria again, and I'll bite you!" was the dutiful rejoinder of this exemplary wife.

"This is very sad!" I ejaculated mournfully. "Rebellion, we are told, is as the sin of witchcraft. Of the latter, madam, I know you to have been guilty, else should not I be here beside you, erroneously styling myself your lord and master. But, that these crimes should be found allied—however, I waive the subject. Enough too, love, of the remoter future. Hey for one other jolly week, then to town and—and—buckle to!"

We started next day, for Fowey.

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

A SHADY NOOK.

No person of middle age and vigorous appetite sympathises more heartily with athleticism than the writer. I love a cricket-match, and enjoy the prospect of lusty gentlemen engaged on a broiling afternoon in the exercise known to sporting writers as "leather hunting"—which, as my readers are probably aware, consists in running after a cricket-ball impelled in various directions by a remorseless batsman, who having mastered the bowling gives the field a fine time of it. It is delicious to watch little Purseleigh's short legs running hopelessly after a hit for four, and still more invigorating to hear him declare that he never enjoyed cricket more in his life. Perhaps he does, for Purseleigh is a steadfast little man, and a rising light at

the bar. His energies, which are unceasing, are concentrated upon two objects: the increase of his income, and the reduction of the too solid flesh which threatens to encumber him. Wherefore he passes all his leisure time in the Turkish bath, or in an improvised machine of the same kind which he has organised at home, on the back of a high trotting cob, on the lofty bicycle, in the cricket-field, or in a wager-boat. I respect and admire Purseleigh, but I should love him better if I could see him at rest just for once. For what is better than perfect repose under favourable conditions of light and temperature? Of course, there will always be differences of taste as to the best kind of repose. I knew a man once, who, early in July, would pass an entire day in the fields asleep on his back in the sun. He declared that he enjoyed this fiery rest exceedingly, and that, moreover, it increased his manly beauty by burning his skin to the hue of a Red Indian. I daresay he is alive now, and probably keeps up his extraordinary style of holiday-making; but as for me, albeit I love to look upon sunny spots, I prefer to look upon them from a grateful shade, as the Latin poet loved to admire the raging sea from afar.

At Skindle's, hard by Maidenhead-bridge, I realise my dream in perfection—the preservation of personal coolness, and the admiration of exertion and heat in others. From my open window, carefully protected from the noonday glare, I look delightedly on such patches of bright blue sky as are visible through rents in the leafy screen. The sun shines through the tender green leaves with delicious effect. Here and there a splash of light comes bodily through and brightens a fragment of emerald turf; anon, as a passing cloud struggles for an instant against victorious day, little sunbeams play at hide and seek among the laburnums and westerias. From beneath the dome of verdure I catch a magnificent glimpse of the river, blazing with light. As it breaks against the arches of Maidenhead-bridge, the flood gleams with metallic splendour. As the blades of sun-defying oarsmen feather sharply, they fling off from their thin edge a sheet of silver. All the narrow strip of riverscape visible beneath the leafy fringe of Skindle's sparkles and glitters with a silvery sheen. As a tiny sailing-boat glides slowly past, the gaff becomes transfigured from a spar of modest wood

into a rod of burnished silver. There is no fatigue to the eye in watching the glittering scene from the snug retreat, whence arises the soft murmuring of musical voices, ever and anon broken in upon by the bright ripple of feminine laughter.

I bless my stars that our cheerful, not merry company—Heaven defend me from merriment in hot weather!—is composed of quiet folk, neither very old nor very young; neither exacting age nor tiresome youth being represented among us. Our water-party has left at home—except one dog too precious to be left among children—all creatures of less than sixteen or more than sixty years. It is hardly necessary to add that the sixteen-year-olds are of the fair or unfair sex only. No person in his senses would spoil the tranquil beauty of riverside scenery by importing into it Mr. Hobbledohoy. No doubt he is a fine fellow at his school, not quite, if my recollections be accurate, the Christian gentleman and Protestant hero that a few enthusiastic writers would make him out to be, but yet strong, manly, and self-reliant, if a little coarse, brutal, and tyrannical withal. But as he shines most brilliantly at school it would be a sin and shame to remove him from that congenial sphere, and “that horrid boy” is carefully excluded from our summer-day’s enjoyment, as an incongruous and impossible element. The maiden of sixteen is a very different person. She is not deserving of the stigma of her dramatist—but stay—let me pause, and in the absence of a copy of Mr. Sheridan’s works, inquire the precise age at which she was “bashful” in his time. Was it sixteen or fifteen? A year or two, however, does not make much difference now, whatever it may have done when George the Third was king. I count myself a happy philosopher in being acquainted with a large number of damsels between the ages of twelve and twenty, and I feel proud to bear testimony to the fact that I never discover the slightest approach to bashfulness in any of them. Their self-possession is admirable, and a lesson and reproach to the “gushing” young lady of the last generation, who now, although a matron, and despite a cincture of formidable size, and a duplex or triplex chin, suffers her natural impulsiveness to penetrate the adipose tissue in which it should be, but is not, buried. I have been privileged to hear their comments

on the fully-developed “gusher.” Their dainty noses become “tip-tilted” at an astounding angle as they pass judgment on the dowager Duchess of Gandershire, as a “vulgar hysterical old creature.” I listen to them with admiration and awe. There is no doubt on my mind that they could give the duchess referred to a good many points all round the compass. They have been educated as rational beings, whereas even possible duchesses, thirty or forty years ago, were so taught as to develop their emotional rather than their reasoning faculties. Hence “gush” and hysterics generally, and the verse and prose by which those conditions were maintained. The young ladies who condescend to illumine my humble dwelling with their presence are of another complexion altogether; and I have brought a strong detachment to the riverside to-day with two distinct objects: one of which is the gratification of a taste for scenes à la Watteau, and the other the quickening of a naturally sluggish mind. The “damsels,” as it is pretty and archaic to call them, fulfil the contract which I had mentally made with them in the most generous fashion. Whether they will prove joys for ever to the young gentlemen whose destiny it is to wed them, I know not, nor do I care, but I am quite satisfied with their appearance as things of beauty this afternoon. To look upon them, when one is in the blissful state of mind brought about by a moderate consumption of “chaudfroid” of grouse, “aspic de foies gras,” and “Irroy’s carte d’or”—is a solemn delight. As they walk about in the shade, I wonder how they can move at all in the wonderful dresses, buttoned—like Paddy’s coat—behind, and into which they appear to have grown. Graceful as a willow-tree is the tall young lady in toad colour, as she stands on the turf, and beneath a widely-spreading tree fulfils the requirements of the most exigent student of harmonies. Another “damozel,” peach-cheeked and hazel-eyed, evidently knows all about the “symphonies” to be got out of gray and yellow, for her pale-hued cashmere robe is enlivened with yellow bows and ribbons, which culminate in a superb Marshal Niel rose in her hat. Also the maiden in fawn colour, with a suspicion of rosy-hued serpents wandering about her costume till they unite in a wondrous wreath of roses, is a picture to gaze upon, as she stands on a strip of gravel-walk. They know all about

colour, these young persons, and could explain exactly the colour-tone of their wondrous costumes. The fawn-coloured one models, to my certain knowledge, very well, and they can all draw and paint fairly. Their conversation is not entirely about the "last new novel," although I caught, just before I became absorbed in reverie, a few words referring to a popular novelist, as a "person entirely ignorant of the usages of society,"—"detestably vulgar in thought and expression," and so forth. The one crushing adjective with my damsels "*aux tendres couleurs*," is "vulgar." One may, it seems, be wicked, depraved, dishonest in thought, and treacherous in deed, without awaking any great measure of indignation in the maidens in ribbons and bows and roses; but one may not be vulgar. As their curly heads—all cropped and docked à la bébé—pass to and fro, I catch odd ricochets of sound as it were. Heaven preserve us, is the young "symphony in fawn colour and pink" in earnest? She is, as I gather—for it is thirsty weather, and that Rüdeshimer cup was really very good—a pessimist. Can this fair and beautiful creature, with her fluffy head nodding under the "sweetest" Mother Hubbard chapeau in the world, be really serious? "You read the article, of course, dear. They try very hard to demolish poor dear old Schopenhauer, but they cannot. It would have been, ah! how much awfully nicer if we had never been born. And about Schumann now?" and she vanishes out of earshot towards the great rose-tree, against which she stands, knowing, the artful puss, that the pink tones of her dress carry up the pleased eye to the masses of rose-blooms which form a background for her graceful figure. And is this what comes of Cheltenham College, of Queen's, and of Girton? Celestial colour-harmonies embodied in idyllic robes, great sunshades with rivers of lace careering round them, the late Mr. Schumann, the present Mr. Wagner, Schopenhauer, and "it were better for us that we had never been born!"

Somehow it seems later and cooler. The silvern sheen has departed from the river, now invaded by deep green and purple shadows. The "symphonies" too have vanished for the moment, and I look across the lawn at the solitary angler, sitting like Patience in a punt. How changed has Skindle's become within the memory of man

—that is to say, the memory of some men. Time out of mind the Orkney Arms at Maidenhead-bridge has been a famous hostelry. Perched on the edge of the great Bath-road, between London and Reading, the old inn knew the days when country squires in their coach-and-six rolled up to town at the rate of two miles an hour, as well as those in which some half-hundred four-horse coaches "spanked" past within the twenty-four hours. Then came a period when the Orkney Arms knew coaches no more, and the world—save that of waggons and market-carts—drifted far away from Maidenhead-bridge. In the silent summer morning, long before the stars had died out of the dark blue sky, a long procession of waggons still stopped at the old-fashioned inn on their way to market, the mouths of Dobbin and of Hodge were duly washed out, and fruit and vegetables sped onward to hungry London. But the last notes of the guard's post-horn had died away in Fontarabian echoes long before a revival came to the inn by Maidenhead-bridge. Then came the great athletic revival, and Skindle's became known as a great place for boating-parties, and a special house to stop at on the way down the river from Oxford. The quarters were good, the beer was undeniable, the chops and bacon perfect, the new-laid eggs as far beyond suspicion as Cæsar's wife herself. Down the river from Henley, Marlow, and Cookham, and up from Windsor, rowed stalwart youth, to partake of the good fare and smoke a pipe at the honest old inn. Then came the reign of a new proprietor, imbued with the traditions of the Trafalgar, and holding special theories of his own as to whitebait. Skindle's was revolutionised. From a dusty and old-fashioned roadside inn, it suddenly bloomed out in a pleasant lawn leading down to the river, in snug rooms abutting on the said lawn, in trees, in shrubs, and in cookery. Skindle's cared but little now for market-carts and waggons, for the charioteer of the new period fixed on Maidenhead-bridge as his goal. Down came the drags by the dozen and the score—the procession led by His Grace of Badminton, by Mr. "Hugh Smith," or by poor "Harry" Hastings. The oldest inhabitant of Taplow woke up with a start, and thought the old coaching-days must have come back again, as the notes of the post-horn rang in his ears, and the slashing teams, roans and browns, bays and grays, came this time

really "spanking" up to the Orkney Arms—and it was only after rubbing his eyes for some time that he saw the difference between a drag and a mail-coach. The carriage was perfect, the horses perfect, the harness all that could be desired—but, save in the case of two or three members of the Four-in-hand Club, the coachman himself was not all that could be desired, and once elicited a quaint remark from my aunt's coachman, whose pace and accuracy through a crowded thoroughfare afford his employer unfeigned delight. I asked this son of Nimshi one day what he thought of the four-in-hand driving of the period. His answer was peculiar. "Drivin', sir! Do you call it drivin'? There's a many as can shove along, but precious few as can drive." But if the driving was rather fast and furious than skilful—the meat and drink were excellent, and to get the Trafalgar cookery, wines, and management moved up to Maidenhead-bridge was "too awfully jolly" a thing to neglect. So the generation of plungers entered into Lewis's—late Skindle's—and ate and drank there, and doubtless laid one another many a six to four in hundreds and "monkeys"—entre deux plats. Lewis's became the fashion. High-bred dames turned Sabbath-breakers, and came down by the afternoon train to Taplow on Sundays, to row under Cliefden-woods, and eat whitebait afterwards at the Orkney Arms. Then more very fashionable people, utterly exhausted by doing nothing all the week, elected to retreat to Skindle's from Saturday to Monday, to refresh their weary minds and bodies. Since this the lawn has become the dream of beauty I have vainly striven to describe.

As the air has—while I have been maundering of plungers and whitebait—grown decidedly cool, and the crescent moon has put in a pale protest against the long-protracted day, I will, methinks, jump into a canoe, paddle towards Cookham, passing by crowded Boulter's-lock, and nestle for awhile under "Cliefden's proud alcove," hung with gorgeous drapery of many-hued leafage.

Round the magnificent yellow-green yew-trees lurk other shades than that of "wanton Shrewsbury." Frederick, Prince of Wales, the "Fred" who would be forgotten were it not for the famous epitaph—

Here lies Fred,
Who was alive, but now is dead—

dwelt for a short space at Cliefden, carrying hither his little vanities, trumpery

ambition, and general smallness. Little as "Fred" was in himself, he was the occasion of some considerable events on this the finest river site in England. Conceited, fussy Thomson, author of *The Seasons*, produced his masque of Alfred at Cliefden while "Fred" was consul; and as I turn my back on Cookham-lock, and glance towards the right bank of the river in quest of the White Lady without a Head, it seems that the strains of our National Anthem are borne on the wind, from the house where God Save the Queen was played for the first time a hundred and thirty-seven years ago.

It is an easy paddle down the river, now from silver to steel by the early moonlight. The air is full of melody; the sweet, low cooing of the doves responding to the deeper and hoarser tone of the rooks. There are lights now shining from Skindle's, and I am particularly interested in those in a certain room opening on to the lawn. There—for I have dawdled over long at Cliefden—is my water-party, very seriously intent upon dinner. My entrance is greeted with as much hilarity as the manners of the present day will admit of, and the dinner progresses pleasantly enough, with but little conversation, for everybody is tired and hungry. Soon after dinner, the "symphonies" and "arrangements" in divers colours vanish altogether. This is hard, as I had intended to hold a lengthened conversation with the disciple of Schopenhauer, hoping, when inspired by the moon and a cigar, to bring her to a better way of thinking; but she is gone, and I must needs go rest to the pleasant lullaby of multitudinous birds.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER IV. ARIADNE.

I WAS greatly surprised to learn of Paul's departure; and something I felt of indignation. Doris, no doubt, perceived this; she hastened to defend and excuse her husband.

"It was not his fault," she said; "indeed it was not his fault. He was obliged to go."

"But so suddenly!"

"He could not help that. He would have stayed if he could. You do not question that he would have stayed, if he could?" She spoke impetuously.

"No, Doris. And he will return——?"

"God knows when he will return." And she burst into tears.

I had for the moment failed to note how wan she looked—how dejected and ill. She was trembling violently from nervous excitement, perhaps, as much as from physical weakness. I had never seen her before with so haggard a face—with such a wild light in her eyes. She was very pale, and her lips were parched with fever—her hair was pushed from her face, as though she had been pressing her hands upon her burning forehead. Her manner was distracted, and she spoke incoherently; she scarcely knew what she said, I think, she was altogether so unnerved and agitated and scared.

"I am glad you're come, Basil," she said, in low, faltering tones, "I've been wanting so to see you. Will you have some tea? Have you had breakfast? What time is it? I've lost count of things somehow. It wasn't raining when you came in, was it? I do so hope it will be fine, for Paul's sake. He's gone from me—but I told you that before. What was I saying just now? I am wretchedly tired, I feel quite worn out; it's from the fatigue and excitement of yesterday, I suppose. People said the play went off very well; but I own I was not satisfied. I did not know that Paul was going away. It came upon me quite unexpectedly. It was a heavy blow to me—it was as much as I could do to bear it. I don't think I shall ever act again; I'm left without heart, or mind, or strength for anything. You don't know—you can't think—no one will ever know—how dear Paul is to me. He has gone, and he has taken my life with him, or nearly so. I am sure I am half dead this morning. Yes, and my senses have gone—and my heart—and my heart—that's with Paul my husband. It's hard—it's very hard—but I am going to be brave for Paul's sake. I promised him that I would be brave—and I mean to keep my word."

I said all I could to soothe her. She had great need, as it seemed to me, of rest and quiet. Her mind was suffering as from a heavy blow. Her deep love for her husband, I did not doubt; and yet it was strange to me to find my sister, the Doris of my childhood—the light-hearted, sprightly, high-spirited Doris—troubled so

seriously. In truth, I had not supposed her capable of such profound emotion; but then I had never once imagined that sorrow could cast upon her shadows so dense, and dark, and ominous.

In my own heart, I could not but think with some severity, perhaps with some injustice, of Paul Riel, whom I held accountable for her sufferings. Was he worthy of the love she had given him? of the sacrifice she had made for him? I deplored her meeting with him. It was a misfortune that she had ever known him.

"You must not accuse Paul," she said, as though she had read my thoughts. "He is altogether blameless in this matter. He is all that is good, and kind, and noble. He left me simply at the call of duty. You would not have had him betray his duty? He has not deserted me, Basil—you don't think that?"

"I will not think that, Doris."

"And it may be that his absence will be but for a little while—that he will come back to me very soon."

"Indeed, I trust so, Doris."

"Ah! but you say that, not really believing it, but merely to pacify me. You treat me as a child crying for the moon, and you promise me what I cry for, to cheat me into being quiet and going to sleep. But Paul will come back—you do not doubt it?"

"Pray be calm, Doris; try and be calm."

"I am calm—only—what do you know of Paul, that you should distrust him? Ah! this conspiracy—you know of that. The thought of it makes me shiver. It stops the beating of my heart; it tortures, it kills me, this conspiracy. Dear Basil, be kind to me, deal frankly with me. See how broken and wretched I am! If I have ever acted inconsiderately towards you, or offended you in ever so trifling a way, don't visit it upon me now; for, indeed, I can't bear it. You must be my friend, and help me in this dreadful time."

She spoke with a sort of wild plaintiveness that was intensely pathetic.

"Do you know more of Paul than I do? Tell me of this conspiracy. All you know of it."

"I have but general knowledge of it, Doris, and probably you know as much as I do. As I understand the matter, Paul is a member of one of the many political societies that exist, and have long existed, on the continent of Europe. These secret brotherhoods have one object in common, if they seek its attainment by different

paths. They would advance the cause of Liberty all over the world. They would destroy tyranny wherever found. You know to what these doctrines tend? To revolution and the shooting down, as though they were mere wild beasts, of all kings and ministers who oppress the people, and are the foes of freedom."

"I know, I know," she said wearily. "I have heard all that before so often. It is all such jargon to me! Why need my poor Paul trouble himself about such matters? Why could he not stay here and be happy with me? He does not love me as I love him. I would have given up all the world for him; yet he sacrifices me for the sake of all this foolish talk about liberty and tyranny and the rights of the people! He was not well when he went away; he is far from strong; he is not fitted to take part in these rash ventures and perils. He was mad to join in their conspiracies."

"He should not have married, I think, with these terrible obligations binding him," I said musingly.

"He should not have married me? How can you say that, Basil? He loved me—he will always love me. He is my own, own husband; he will never love but me. He is mine, all mine—no, not all, for he belongs in great part to this hateful conspiracy. You are right, Basil; the obligations binding him are terrible indeed. He is their abject slave. He is sent for and he must go. He is without will of his own. Some unseen power commands him, and he must obey at all costs, at the sacrifice even of his wife, poor woman! It is a cruel thing that a man should be so bound. I detest these secret societies."

"They are the bitter fruits of centuries of wrong-doing, and misery, and oppression. They are the protests of a people against the tyranny of their rulers. If madness and crime result, let those take heed who have laboured to enslave and to crush their fellow-men by heaping upon them shame after shame, outrage after outrage."

"Ah, Basil, it is vain to say such things to the wife of a conspirator whose life is in danger! Paul has gone because he was bidden to go. He must do what he is bidden to do. He is bound by an oath—is not that so? And if there were no oath, still that sense of honour, as it is called, which constrains men to do so many strange and incomprehensible things, would be equally binding upon him. He must quit me—to do what, Basil?"

I hesitated to answer her.

"You know; but you shrink from saying. He has gone to strike a blow for freedom—is not that how I should speak of it? But the blow falls upon his wife's heart! This thing is killing me, Basil. Paul is in dire peril. Is it not so? You turn away. He is ordered to attempt the life of the French king. What has the French king ever done to me, that I should wish him dead? Basil, it is horrible! It maddens me to think of it. Will Paul return alive and safe to me? Tell me that."

"Calm yourself, Doris. Hope for the best."

"Hope for the best, when the worst is happening! Basil, do you know the doom of those who attempt the life of the French king? They are made to walk barefoot to the Place de Grève; a black veil covers them. Then, in presence of the guillotine, they are cruelly tortured before they are permitted to die: their right hands are chopped off with an axe, and then—and then—— It sickens me to think of it. It is too horrible! I read it in a book by chance one day, and it has haunted me ever since. The thought visits me in my dreams in the dead of night, and I wake screaming with horror. Paul has gone from me to die like that! Do you wonder that I am ill; that my heart is ready to break; that the tears rush to my eyes; that my brain seems on fire; that I tremble so; that my hands burn; that my voice gives way, and I cry and wail in an agony of grief? Basil, I am going mad! Be comforted? How can I be comforted? What can I look forward to if Paul dies? And he has gone to his death! I could read it in his face as he left me—he has gone to his death! What am I to do—what can I do but die too? I must be where my Paul is—my husband. If he is lying cold and stark in his grave—well, let me lie down there too beside him—I ask only that. I must be where Paul is. If he is dead I promise to die too—soon, very soon—only don't part us. We're husband and wife, you know; we should not be parted. God has joined us together—ah! and man has sundered us!" She gave way to a sort of paroxysm of grief.

"Doris," I said, "you promised to be brave. Did you not tell Paul that you would be brave?"

"Yes, yes; I said so. You do well to remind me of it, Basil. I'll keep my word—at least I'll try to keep my word."

"And you'll try, too, to be patient. If it be, as you say, and as indeed seems only

too likely, that Paul has gone away upon a service of danger, let him think that he leaves a brave wife behind him, who is hoping for him, praying for him, waiting with a courageous patience for his safe return to her. Doris, it would afflict Paul cruelly, it would unnerve him completely, if he could think of you as you are now, my poor sister, with this downcast face, these tears, these tremulous limbs, this burning forehead."

"Can he see me, I wonder?" she said, with a start, staying her tears for the moment and smoothing her disordered hair. "Sometimes I almost persuaded myself that the eyes of love have power to diminish space and pierce obscurities, and can watch and gaze at far-distant things as though they were quite near. For hours and hours I have sat quite still, and it seemed to me that I could see before me in a bright circle surrounded by black clouds the figure of Paul—very small and a long way off, yet so clear that his every feature was distinctly visible to me. He was standing upon the deck of a ship, that rocked upon a rough sea, straining his eyes for the first glimpse of that France he loves so fondly, and for whose sake he has gone to risk his life. He looked calm, yet very resolute, with lowered brows and compressed lips, and very pale—but then he was always pale. It was not a dream, Basil; it was all far more true and real than in a dream. If Paul had turned he could have seen me, our eyes would have met. But he had no thought for me. France is so much to him, and his wife so little! Yet there may be moments in which he thinks of me, and can see me as I saw him. For it's gone now, Basil. It was like a vision, strangely bright and distinct, yet gone suddenly, before one could call to it to stay. Perhaps there are times when such visions open before him, and I appear to him plainly and clearly, as he appeared to me. I must be careful, Basil, and, as you say, patient; and, as I promised Paul, brave—as brave as I can be, though I fear me that cannot be very brave after all. But I wouldn't have him see me like this. How dreadfully untidy, and my hair all loose, and my face wet with tears! Yes, Basil, I'll do as you tell me; you're clever and wise, and you've always given me good advice. I'll wait and hope and pray." She started and shivered; a new thought or fear seemed to trouble her.

"Basil," she said presently, in a low,

frightened voice, "can I pray for him? Ought I to pray for him? For I forgot to tell you one thing. When I saw him, in that vision I spoke of, he stood erect with his arms folded and his hands half concealed; yet I could see, for all he seemed trying to hide them, that he held in one hand a knife and in the other a pistol. He has gone from me to commit a crime, that is the plain truth. Can I pray for his success?"

"Pray that he may be safely restored to you."

"But with blood upon his hands? Can I pray that he may return a murderer? Heaven will not listen to such a prayer as that. Basil, it would be like praying for a curse."

"Pray that he and all of us may be spared both temptation and sin."

"He has already yielded to the temptation—the sin is very near to him. But he does not think it sin; he firmly believes it to be a duty. Heaven will remember that when he comes to be judged. It is in his eyes a grand and solemn duty. Accomplishing it, he is content to sacrifice his own life—and mine, of course, though he does not know how closely my life is bound to his, and that when his heart stops beating mine will stop too—I love him so, I love him so! It's hard to know what to do. I never thought that I could be so unhappy as I am; that my life could be so full of trouble as it is. Yet I have known what it is to be happy. I was very happy as Paul's wife. It is something to think of when I am most miserable, that I was very happy as Paul's wife. I am glad you came to see me, Basil; it was good of you to come. I am the better for having seen you; I am calmer, more composed, already, you see; and you must not think the worse of me for having talked so wildly, for having given way so completely. My poor brain was in such a whirl, I hardly knew what I said or what I did. I am better now. I think I'll make myself a cup of tea; I've tasted nothing since Paul went away—my poor Paul!—and that's long, long hours ago now."

But she was hardly well enough for me to leave her until late at night, when she had fallen into a deep sleep. Fortunately the landlady of the lodging-house in which Doris and her husband had been living, proved to be a good-natured and worthy sort of woman, of kindly bearing and somewhat superior manners. There was nothing about her of the unsympathetic

quality we are apt to associate with the mistress of a lodging-house. She was not ill-favoured, nor was she ungentele of speech or conduct. Already, I think, she had been won by a certain charm which seemed to attend upon Doris, and to win interest on her behalf. And most women are susceptible of a sort of feminine tenderness, or, it may be, commiseration, for a newly-wed wife.

"You may rely upon my taking every care of her, as though she were my own child, sir, indeed you may," said the landlady. "I am sure I feel for her, poor dear. If my own dear daughter had lived—but she died when she was only thirteen, and it nearly broke my heart—she'd have been about the same age by this time; and she'd exactly the same bright, pretty-coloured hair. She's in heaven, now, poor darling. Let's hope she's been spared a many cares. I shall sit up all night, sir, you may rely upon that. She shan't want for nothing."

I had enquired of Doris as to her future plans.

"I shall remain here," she said. "Paul will write to me here. He has promised to write to me to this address. I shall get his letters the sooner by remaining here. Indeed that makes it impossible for me to go from here."

"You have money, Doris? Pray deal frankly with me."

"Paul left me all he could. It was not much—he could not spare much. We have been very poor, Basil, as you know. We are likely to remain poor all our lives, I think; but I intend to make what Paul left me last as long as I possibly can, and after that has gone——"

"When that has gone, Doris, you will let me help you?"

"When that has gone I have still this"—she showed me Mr. Leveridge's ring—"it has befriended me before, and will again if need arises. It is of great value; it is quite a fairy ring."

She had slid it upon her handkerchief, and was swinging it to and fro, as the lady is swinging her wedding-ring upon her handkerchief in one of Hogarth's pictures. She stopped suddenly.

"Don't think me heartless, Basil. I prize this ring though I am making a toy

of it. It came back to me in the strangest way after I had parted with it, as I thought, for ever. I cannot doubt to whose kindness I owe its return to me. He is a good man, that Mr. Leveridge."

Presently she added: "I wanted Paul to take this ring with him. I thought its value might some day prove of service to him. But by accident or by design he left it behind him. I shall be very, very sorry to part with it again, and—Mr. Leveridge will forgive me—when I sell it again it will be to buy bread, for no other reason. But I must live, if I can, for Paul's sake. Poor Mr. Leveridge! If he ever sighed for vengeance—but he never did, I know him better than that—he is fully avenged for my cruelty to him. If he could see me now he would see me sad and weakened, wretched enough. But he would be far more pained than pleased. He had but one fault—he loved me so much more than I could love him. Why did he not love me less? I should have respected him so much more. Strange that love should vary so much in value. Paul's love is all in all to me; Mr. Leveridge's love is nothing to me, or is something to shiver at and start from. Poor Mr. Leveridge!"

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STRANGE WATERS.

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BOOK I.

CHAPTER IV. CUCUMBERS, AND OTHER GOURDS.

I BEGIN to fear that the Earldom of Quorne is assuming uncomfortable dimensions, considering that hitherto it is but a shadow. It is time to see what lay inside.

Considered as a shadow, it was very large indeed—so large as well-nigh to overshadow a considerable portion of the entire county, of which the city of Winbury is the capital. Such had been the case for many generations. The Mordants, Earls of Quorne, had, no student of the peerage need be told, come in with the Conqueror, and had contrived to stay where they had settled, through all the vicissitudes of the history of England. They had always been distinguished for a singular absence of dangerous qualities; they were the most negative family in the whole of the United Kingdom. They had been famous neither in the armies nor in the councils of their sovereigns; nobody had ever feared them, and therefore nobody had ever injured them. Like their own peaches, they lived on the laziest and sunniest side of the wall.

Hinchford—Viscount Hinchford was the second title of the house—was the principal seat, and quite a show place in its way. It was of a not unfamiliar pattern. The house itself was built very large and very low, as if the architect had been careful to observe, literally as well as metaphorically, the tastes of a family famous for making itself comfortable on its own soil, and with a rooted objection to going up-

stairs. Palladian, I think, was the name of the style; at least the County Histories called it so, dwelling lovingly upon its fluted columns and the exact dimensions of its architraves. Along the many-windowed front ran a long terrace with a stone balustrade, with a broad flight of quasi-marble steps descending from the centre, and pots of shrubs along the coping, after the fashion of Versailles, to which the same County Histories never failed to compare Hinchford. There was a home-park and a deer-park. The interior was arranged for comfort as well as for luxury; and there were gardens and greenhouses that formed its crowning glory. There never were such peaches and nectarines, as grew on those walls, nor such strawberries as grew on those beds, even when it rained—as Jenny of The Five Adzes had tested for at least once in her days. Every Earl of Quorne had his taste. It was invariably respectable, and ranged from connoisseurship in old port and its ensuing gout, to black-letter learning and its consequent—say wisdom. Horticulture was the ruling passion of the present, and eleventh, Earl of Quorne.

He was a dapper little man of middle age, who ruled one whole fifth part of the county, and served a gardener from the Lothians. There was a time of his youth when he had held the Queen's commission as a lieutenant in the Coldstreams; but he had never obeyed his colonel with the docility he displayed towards plain Alexander Ferguson. He had his reward. He invariably carried off the first prize for peaches at the county flower show; and he lived on his gardener's glory for the rest of the year. What gold, not merely of sunshine, was melted in the crucible

must remain untold. It is doubtful if Mr. Ferguson himself could tell; that he never did tell is beyond contradiction.

Such was the Earl of Quorne; and he was a happy earl. But once a year he was unhappy—from the beginning of May to the middle of July—and the worst of it was that this was just the most critical time of the whole year for the fruit garden. While he was away, who could tell what unseasonable frost might not deprive him of the first county prize?

But it was destiny. As far as Mr. Ferguson was greater than the earl, so was the countess greater than even Mr. Ferguson.

Apart from their being earl and countess, a relationship which renders it unnecessary to account for any sort of marriage, there was every reason why these two should have come together. Though their hobbies pulled hard in diametrically opposite ways, the fact that each had one may be assumed sufficient to create a bond of sympathy, if not of union.

The Countess of Quorne was in truth a very great lady; indeed she was the daughter of a Marquis of Horchester. But, by a singular caprice—or what would be singular if it were not otherwise—Nature had given her the heart of a thorough-bred Bohemian. I do not mean there was anything wrong about her. Nobody ever breathed or dreamed such a thing of the Countess of Quorne. But her tastes were eminently unsuited to the cultivation of peaches. She looked up to the painters, poets, and musicians who looked up to her. She loved London at peach-blossom and strawberry time, not for the sake of the season, but for the sake of the artistic hangers-on of the season. She loved the atmosphere of the studio, and longed to be a man that she might go behind the scenes. As things were, she was obliged to bring behind-the-scenes into her own drawing-room.

Noblesse oblige; and, after all, she was Countess of Quorne. She could not dispense with her title any more than with her diamonds. So she performed all needful social duties with the utmost dignity and propriety. But during the day she was more often to be found in the workshops of national galleries and anti-national galleries, watching the painting of the pot here and of the kettle there, than at garden parties and such like Philistine doings. She liked sitting for

her portrait. About twenty of her were hung at Hinchford; and very seldom indeed an Academy Exhibition opened without at least one portrait of the Right Honourable the Countess of Quorne. She had a box at both opera houses, and envied the gods in the gallery.

Of course she herself could do a little of everything. She could paint—at least, she did paint—and that with like merit in every style. Landscape, portrait, genre, history, fancy, caricature, were all one to her. She could—at least she did—compose. There, indeed, her field was more limited; she mostly set ballads of which she herself wrote the words—for she was a poet as well as painter and composer. She had published a volume of poems, of which the title matters not, under the nom de plume of *Aspasia*, that she might not be confounded among the common herd of royal and noble authors. Her choice of nom de plume did not say much for the classical scholarship of a lady at once so talented and so respectable, but, nevertheless, she was a classical scholar, and had travelled through half a *Dialogue of Plato* in the footsteps of Lady Jane Grey.

But, though catholic and cosmopolitan both in her tastes and in her accomplishments, she had her caprices and her favourites, like other people. She was terribly strict with regard to women. No prima donna, however distinguished, could hope, save by the passport of the most notorious decorum of manners, to gain a foothold in the house of Lady Quorne. With men it was different; and it was observed that, in her opinion, the better the face the better the painter, or the better the tenor, baritone, or bass, as the case might be. She had no children, and freely exercised her maternal instinct on promising, bright, and handsome young men, so long as they could make a blur with a brush, or stumble through a song, but always so long as they were not of the army of amateurs. For these—being a woman of natural sound sense—she had a mortal aversion. Amateurs, even of opposite sexes, do not love amateurs; and, in addition to all her other accomplishments, Lady Quorne could herself sing the songs she herself wrote to the music she herself composed.

Thus it was certainly not strange that she should have made the acquaintance, in some studio or other, of Walter Gordon, who did not call himself an amateur, and was obviously capable of painting her face

to admiration, on the strength of having a good-looking face of his own.

All was arranged for her giving him a sitting for her thirty-third portrait at Quorne-house in Park-lane, when a telegram came to the earl from no less a person than Alexander Ferguson at Hinchford. It ran as follows:

"Largest cucumber on record. Mr. Plowman."

What was to be done? It was enough to make a saint—much less a mortal earl—swear. A man must have an ambition, after all; and the Earl of Quorne's was to raise a larger cucumber than Mr. Plowman of Mellington, a not distant neighbour in the same county. The earl was facile princeps in wall-fruit; but to Mr. Plowman of Mellington he could not hold a candle in cucumbers. Nevertheless, where there is a will, there is a way. Mr. Ferguson had *carte blanche*—and used it thoroughly. To such purpose did he employ the margin, that this very year the earl's cucumber-frames contained at least three cucumbers bigger than the biggest at Mellington. It was a grand and proud moment for Lord Quorne when the news arrived in Park-lane. But the spirit of rivalry between the competitors seemed to have infected the gourds themselves. There was one unnoticed, unsuspected cucumber at Mellington—a very dark horse, to use a somewhat violent metaphor—that one sunny day felt called upon to assert the honour of the Plowmans. Unsuspected it grew and grew, till it first distanced its neighbours and its rival.

What was to be done, indeed? Here it was, in mid-season, with my lady's painters, poets, and fiddlers in full career, and meanwhile, the battle of the gourds would be lost for want of a general!

There are people who, when they hear of an earthquake, say, at any rate with their hearts, "Ah, it would never have happened if only I'd been there." Such people have an immense faith in the virtue of the master's eye—and it may be, where the servant is the real master, not entirely without reason. *Quis custodiet custodes?*—Mr. Alexander Ferguson might watch nature very well, but who was to watch Mr. Alexander Ferguson?

Now, when two hobbies come in collision, it is clear that one of the two must give way. The countess did not choose, any more than the earl, that she should be left to do all the honours of the season by

herself in the house in Park-lane, and he did not choose to go into the country and watch a cucumber-frame alone. And when these collisions happened, it was invariably the earl who had his way. The narrower the idea, the more certain it is to win. So, in mid-season, the entire household, bag and baggage, left Park-lane, the studios, and the theatres, to enjoy the country in its season, which perversely enough persists in refusing to postpone itself till after the session. Parliament did not miss Lord Quorne; and indeed, in endeavouring to grow the largest cucumber on record, he was doing quite as much service to his country as many of his peers whom he left behind him.

But there is one advantage about being a countess—even though she be eccentric enough to leave town at its fullest, she need never be at a loss for material wherewith to set up a season of her own. For awhile, Hinchford became an offshoot of London. And, when the London season was over, it continued at Hinchford.

For instance, there was no earthly reason why the thirty-third portrait of the Countess of Quorne should not be painted just as well at Hinchford as within the atmosphere of the Royal Academy. Better, indeed; for the countess would be made independent of appointments, which as a lady she kept, but as a Bohemian abhorred, by having the painter at her elbow. I will not go so far as to say that Walter Gordon was displeased at receiving an invitation to Hinchford. I will not even say that he did not give himself an extra air or two on the strength of it, among his friends. He did not remember having sneered a little, a year ago, at Lady Quorne's choice of her portrait-painter last year. On the contrary, he took his piece of good fortune honestly, and without mock modesty—as, on the whole, a man should do.

That was how he came to spend a night in Laxton; for he always preferred his feet to any other sort of conveyance, whenever he had time.

There was one advantage about Hinchford. The character of its mistress made it possible for a man to arrive at its doors in any way he pleased. And, once within its doors, the guests altogether did very much as they pleased. It was not Bohemia, but it was as near an approach to that country, so beloved by those who know it not, as can be contrived by anyone who can afford to spend all at once more than

half-a-crown. Very few really great people were ever found there. Lady Quorne, with the zeal of an amateur Bohemian, which is to the real, simple thing as wine is to milk-and-water, preferred strange to home waters. Thoroughbred Bohemians thought her a little crazy; and would very much have preferred the great people as well as the flesh-pots of Philistia—which she freely gave them.

The many descriptive accounts, locally published, of Hinchford and its neighbourhood called the latter "pastoral." Walter Gordon found it dull, and no doubt it was dull, and was not pastoral. Winbury lay on the right side of the line of low hills, and Hinchford on the wrong, for beauty. But it was a pleasant walk, though rather heavy for the feet after the rain—just heavy and just long enough to raise a quest of strawberries into the regions of chivalry, and no more.

Of course, as it was an unknown country to Walter Gordon, there was an exceptional profusion and confusion of cross roads, each with its signpost, which, however, as a matter of course, invariably refused to point the way to Hinchford, giving ample and superfluous guidance to every place in the county, from Winbury downwards, where Walter Gordon did not want to go.

"To Winbury, to Laxton, to Wilkley, to Grandon—— Sir, will you be so good as to tell me—— Holloa! Why, Gaveston?"

He had been addressing a parson, in the most orthodox of clerical costumes and white collars, and with a long pair of whiskers.

"Gaveston! who would ever have thought of meeting you here?"

"Why, Gordon?"

"Ah, then you are Gaveston! After all, when I come to think of it, there's no reason why two people shouldn't meet anywhere. Last night I had a much more unexpected meeting. But I didn't know you were going into the Church, old fellow. I always thought fast bowling more in your line. Are you fixed in this country? I must come and look you up before I leave, and have a talk over old times."

The two young men were of about the same age; but were made to be contrasted in other respects than in the matter of costume. But there is no need to dwell on that point; we remember Reginald Gaveston, and we know Walter Gordon.

A long series of Dorcas meetings had increased the air of wisdom suggested by every hair in the whiskers of the ex-cricketer; while every trace of Oxford had been rubbed away from the more cosmopolitan Walter.

"I live at Winbury; I'm curate of St. Anselm's there," said Gaveston. "I suppose you're at the bar?"

"No; your chances of getting a chancellor's living are gone, if you were counting on my being on the woolsack. By Jove! I've been so many things since Oxford that I wonder you know me. I hardly know myself at times. Well, extremes do meet. You're here because you're a parson, and I because I'm a travelling painter. Do you know, I should like to hear you preach a sermon, Gaveston?"

The curate coloured; but whether from pleasure at a possible compliment, or from an uncomfortable sense that Walter's desire might be connected with certain oats sown at Oxford a little inconsistent with sermonising, is hard to say.

"I mean it," said Walter. "You would preach a splendid sermon if you haven't forgotten how you used to bowl. I shall come to Winbury on Sunday. Which way are you going now?"

"I am for the present at Hinchford, Lord Quorne's place, you know. But we shall be extremely glad to see you if you are passing by Winbury."

"Why, then you are the very man for me! But—we? What tale does that tell?"

"I'm married, you know," said Mr. Gaveston—not, Walter thought, with quite so much satisfaction as he had spoken of his visit to Lord Quorne.

"Married? Well, there's more change in you than there is in me, after all. It's quite clear I must come to Winbury. I must know Mrs. Gaveston. You've got on farther in life than I have. So you're going to Hinchford too? But, excuse me, Gaveston—I didn't know you had any of Lady Quorne's Open Sesames. I'm to paint her portrait—what are you to do?"

"I am to dine and sleep," said the curate of St. Anselm's.

It must not be supposed that Walter Gordon and Reginald Gaveston had ever been special friends, even at Oxford. Nor was it likely that the curate, now grooved down into Winbury and caught and tamed, was exactly overjoyed at meeting with so thorough-paced a Bohemian as his old

acquaintance seemed to boast of being. The pleasure of meeting was all on Walter's side, who was always glad to meet an old face—next to meeting a new. And no doubt marriage may change a man. He might have been very glad to meet Walter anywhere but in his own country, where he would not be expected to give him a bed and ask him to dinner.

However, in one respect Walter Gordon was decidedly thick-skinned—or rather honest experience had gone far to prove to his own satisfaction that his company could not be less agreeable to others than to himself. And that, at any rate, is one great secret of the art of pleasing. And another was, that he never found anybody dull. He could always listen enough for one, and talk enough for two. During the walk from the signpost to the lodge-gate of Hinchford, he had talk for at least one and three quarters. Reginald Gaveston was a very brilliant man in Winbury, but he did not come up to his reputation on the road to Hinchford.

And yet—and yet—how is that to be said of Walter Gordon of which he was utterly unaware, and could scarcely be said even unconsciously to feel? He was the same, while trying to talk nonsense very hard to his old college acquaintance, as he had always been; and yet that evening and morning at The Five Adzes had practically cut his life in two. His adventure, even in these few hours since, had well-nigh passed out of his mind, except as an amusing anecdote which, with a few humorous touches of his own, might serve to make up a story to tell hereafter, including the idyll of the strawberries. Nothing had happened but trifles. But he knew, if without reflection or even conscious feeling one can be said to know, that an influence was upon him. It might be accompanied by dislike, by contempt even. Childish caprice, selfish ill humour, insatiable hunger for the admiration even of bores, and a hundred similar things, had all been displayed openly before him, and all the more glaringly by reason of the barrenness and poverty of the back-ground. The ill humours he had seen would have lost their point in a loftier atmosphere; in an appropriate air, they would have been invisible. He had seen a woman turning trifles into tragedies to suit her humour; she might have turned tragedies into comedies; it was the intense nature of the woman that he had seen, so intense as to need no conditions or circumstances

for its display. And there had been no barrier between herself and her influence. Nothing had distracted his whole attention from her; she and her moods, her eyes, and her voice, had filled up the whole of life for a while. There had been a sort of fascination, even in the constant suspense as to what she would next do or say. And he who has once been under the spell of an intense will, however idly exercised, can never be quite the same as before—there is something new in him. The world contains a new human life for him. In a word, he might dislike, or even despise; but the world with Clari in it could never be the same as the world without Clari. He might never see her again; he might, and no doubt would, forget her, save as a piece of comedy; but she would always be there. Perhaps, it is wrong after all to say of such natures that they fascinate. They electrify.

But did all this come wholly from her, or did it need something in him to work upon? Would the same magnetic force have struck through the shell of the Reverend Reginald Gaveston, or turned Lord Quorne from watching his favourite cucumber through his own private spectacles and saying, "It grows?"

EARLY WORKERS.

PRINTING.

THEY do their printing in a chapel? Yes; and this is quite right, little chapas as they are, in tunics of dark gray frieze, and trousers of lasting corduroy. In addition, all mature and big printers, do their printing in a chapel; and this again is quite right also. It is because of that chapel, or chapel-house, otherwise almonry, at Westminster, in which Caxton began his foreign-learned and freshly-imported Mechanick Handiwerke of Printing. For four centuries has this had graceful reminiscence. Caxton had a chapel placed at his disposal in which to deal his golden death-blow to scribevage, in which to show monks and friars, hurrying from their missal-making across the cloisters wonderingly, by what means their fair art of missal-making was to be sapped of its life for ever. And to this day every building, no matter its size, its shape, its locality, in which Early Workers (and others) do their printing, has, in some method or another, the name of chapel clinging to it still. Though the name of chapel is beginning to lose, with

some, its original meaning of a place, it still means everywhere the company of printers who work in it, who make their own laws, enforce their own fines, elect and eject according to their own judgments and predilections; and as this sort of chapel is presided over by a chief, and this chief is a father, does not the old abbey life, with the old priestly cowl pervading it, linger in this quite as much as is needed? Further, if little Early Workers (or others) by accident print words and letters too pale, such words and letters are called friars, white friars, it will be perceived; and if little Early Workers (or others) print words and letters too black, such words and letters are called monks; which again carries our thoughts back Caxton-wards.

Now, the Early Workers at printing, under present examination, are other examples of the children called half-timers. They are kept at their schooling for one government attendance of about three hours daily; with teaching efficiently performed; with exceptionally tasteful music refining it; with animal sympathies kept wholesomely alive by the (non-compulsory) attendance of a great black dog, to bask before the fire where the fire is hottest, and wag his tail at judicious intervals; and they are kept at their trade for the remainder of the available day, amounting, when the necessary divisions of it are pieced together, to some five good hours. They do their work excellently. They stand in the midst of their productions, hung up as an economical and advertising mode of wall-decoration; and since these productions are gigantic "broad-sides," with gigantic letters designed to startle and attract, he who runs may read. There is Somebody's Celebrated Jamaica Ginger-beer—as an example—in remarkably lively blue; the ginger of it prodigious, the Jamaica of it modest, as probably it is in the composition, after precisely the same proportion; with the big blue bottle of it accurate and full life-size, its label, cork, wire, and chiar'-oscuro perfect. There is Life in the Arctic Regions in faint icy green; the letters smeared and slipping sideways, and shivery, to give the effect of snow. There is Mr. Somebody's professional name in bewitching pink; the scenes and cities he is to lecture upon in pink also; the dissolving views that are to illustrate him going back to unpresumptuous green; the pence that are to be paid for seeing him being printed

very little, so that very little may be thought of them. There is a Welsh Girl put prettily into brown; with all the history of how she is a ship that will sail with emigrants somewhere, on such a day, for so much, put prettily into brown to match her. There are Mr. Somebody's Coffee and Dining Rooms gone cheerfully into blue again; with large cups of coffee, and small cups of coffee, and rashers of bacon, and eggs, and bloaters, blue, everyone; and with "hot joints daily" thrust at the bottom, into such renewed conspicuousness and colour, they must be extra aggravation to little Early Workers condemned to print them, and not to eat them, since the small people know all the while, moreover—for their handy-work proclaims it—that the joints will be ready enticingly from twelve till two. To these must be added the fine ship Enmore, in mercantile black; the Tobago A 1, in the same mercantile respectability; some school-board election canvassing posters, equally as self-restrained; a variety of bills of auctions, concerts, charitable dramatic performances, and here and there allusion to San Fernando, Trinidad, the Asphodel; to such wines as Steinberg, Rudelese, Moët, port; to an interesting evening sale of furniture, where, considering the locality (London's far East) and that the goods were seized in distraint for rent, it is eminently satisfactory to find bedsteads, feather beds, carpets, rugs, and so on, warranted to be quite good and — clean. Think of little Early Workers doomed to pass five hours of each day with such alluring surroundings!—whilst Caxton would have been put off with stained and tattered tapestry. Think that they twist out of their machine—turning the handle laboriously to do it—nice little circumstances, such as that meat and potatoes can be had for sixpence; that stews and hashes are the same price, that puddings can be had "various," from a penny to a groat, that morning and evening papers are taken in, that there are early breakfasts at five o'clock, and (at the same establishment) board and lodging for gentlemen! It is easy to imagine how the little fellows might long to be gentlemen, able to have such savoury board and convenient lodging at their choosing, able to have such an expanse of newspapers—from other printers' setting up, other printers' locking, other printers' attention to a machine—to get the news out of, if news-getting

were their whim, or to push aside languidly, if they were weary and disinclined. But these Early Workers at Printing, unhappily, have not many of the qualities and tendencies that distinguish gentlemen born, or out of which gentlemen can be very surely self-made. They are here, under the same roof with their little brethren the compositors,* because, like them, they are vagrant, lazy, untrained; because they have sad propensities to childish untruthfulness, petty theft, and deception, quite beyond the control of parents almost as untrained as themselves. They are here, also—others of them—because they are simply ownerless and poor; certain to pick up vagrancy and evil, and to weave out the chain of vagrancy and evil farther and farther on, if no power kindly took them, and decreed they should be rightly drilled. The same as with other scholars—and these cost only a wide total of seven shillings a week each, for shelter, clothing, food, incidentals, and both instructions—school fare is all the content at present afforded them: and, no more than if they were scholars paid for on a far richer and grander scale, they have not even free ingress and egress in and out of school-gates and walls. But, for all this, there is no occasion that Early Workers at Printing should despair. They are only six years under tuition at the utmost, and may be only four, according to age when received; during the course of these years, a well-behaved boy is sure to have his good behaviour noted, since it cannot fail to make its mark. These well-behaved boys have the privilege, also, of being sent out, “on licence,” as young journeymen, if masters should apply for them; and, in either case, a boy has his future all hopeful and clearly tracked. He who goes outside has a conduct-card sent with him by the governor, and if he brings this card back, marked G for good by his master, on every day when he returns, in that is all that is needful; and, just as with the boy who is all right at home, he may reckon on being a gentleman at some near or distant day—provided he keeps to this capital G for good when he is his own superintendent and governor, and when, from then, henceforth, he takes his place in the world, the receiver of his own pay for the work he has himself done, at large and free.

These little Early Workers at Printing are wanted in a sharp quartette for each machine. There has to be the top-boy, called the layer-on, who lays the sheet of paper upon the grippers; there has to be the medium little man, called the taker-off, to take away the paper when the impression has been made; there are the two little fellows who turn the prodigious handle that makes the wheels creak and move, who might just as well be turning a mangle, and who want nothing but endurance and good strength of spine. Another press under the hand of these Early Workers is the more antique Stanhope. This press, of the sort that folds over its lid, as it were, upon hinges, and that, to print, has to be shut up like a box or a bagatelle-board, with forme, paper, and all contents hidden entirely away, requires different divisions of labour in working it; but whether the Early Workers are busy at the old press or the new, they become inky enough to be known by that generic term “devil,” otherwise “spirit,” otherwise “fly,” each one meaning the same blackness and smallness, the same impish pliancy and agility. Whether, also, the young Early Workers are busy at the old press or the new, much noise comes with their young working. The press creaks, the press grates, the press grumbles; some movements of it are heavy, some swaying, some have a click. When a room is full of active little Early Workers—at a “spurt,” let it be said, over a “lost” bill suddenly required; or over some parochial squib intended to decide an election of guardians at some hot moment—this noise has extra life in it; and the name that used to be given to it—among adult workers, it is now meant, implying a busy season—was *The Music of the Presses*. Early Workers have never been told of this, in this early stage that is all they have reached; but in the quaint words of William Savage: “When a master-printer hears the creaking of the heads, the thumping of the balls, the noise of the running in and out of the carriage, and all the other miscellaneous, and, to unaccustomed ears, discordant noises,” why, the heart of the master-printer rejoices, Savage goes on to say; and at all printers’ dinners and suppers, in all chapels everywhere, *The Music of The Presses* was ever a standing toast. Early Workers have never been told of this, it was said—no; for balls, for instance, in a printing-office, have long been bowled entirely out of fashion;

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 19, p. 29, “Early Workers.”

rollers take their place in the presses the little people fill with their circulars, and trade-lists, and programmes, and shipping notices; but if the boys ever heard as much, and were told, also, the other dying-out names applied to parts of printing-presses, the whole of them strung together would make a very strange collection. A press, it may just be said (for the oddity), used to be made out to be furnished with a head, feet, cheeks, ribs, face, shanks; to be furnished with cramps, winter, and (quite intelligibly, as a sequence) a coffin; with garter, hose, bed, blanket, bolster—to try and atone for the winter, it is clear. It is not astonishing, after this, to find that the presses of former days were said to squabble, to slur, and to mackle. It seems quite mild behaviour, leaving only the wonder that they were not guilty of a great deal more. Neither is it astonishing, at the end of all this similarity to life, and at the hearing of the noise of it, and at the sight of the smear of it (for the Early Workers are still busy, turning, crunching, and taking off—they stay for no reflection on history or archæology) to find that compositors, in the pride they feel at the superior intelligence required for their own department, call the pressmen's place a piggery, call the pressmen themselves pigs, and enliven their own composing work by giving a pig's grunt whenever a pressman enters their dominions. It is true that much pressmen's work in large cities is carried on in dark and unwholesome places, of which the word pigsty is quite descriptive, and to which it is only too appropriate; but it is excellent to be able to record that no such idea fits into the printing-office of the Early Workers of this sketch at all. They have good wide windows to admit a bright cheering light upon their big blue, and black, and green, and scarlet lettering, as it clothes their walls; there is a good open space of playground, for them to look out upon, and get fresh air from; there is a large sweep above the playground of uninterrupted sky. If their presses, in their queer phraseology, really have "cheeks," they can see every blush that comes to warm them; if their presses, in actual fact, do have "coffins," they can decipher all the floriated scrolls and letters engraved upon the "plates." "Pigeon-holes" is the name for the wide white spaces left between words by poorly-planned composing, and these Early Workers are not deterred by gloom or dark-

ness from detecting each one. The byword for the "imprint," or printer's name and address, that must be affixed to all matter printed (with some few exceptions), used to be "Mr. Pitt's mark," since that statesman was at the helm when the Act passed, and his name, with much political, seditious, and covert meaning, clung to it; and the little Early Workers, as they take their sheets clean off the grippers, can read "Mr. Pitt's mark" clearly, with no need to peer, or pore, or "try their eyes," to do it. It is the same in the building where the Stanhope press effects its "issues." If matter "falls out"; if such an ornament as the "brass-rule" that forms the double "Oxford framing" round the present page had not been locked in quite level; if "monks" or "friars" stalk in, or are seen to be gliding out, the light streams down abundantly for the Early Workers to discover the whole—supposing, that is, they could stop their press for the scrutiny, and supposing that it was in scrutiny that their duty lay. There is a large paper-cutting machine, too, close at hand, with which the boy-printers prepare their "sheets." It might be a deadly guillotine, with that terrible slice down it gives to elephant, to pott, to double-pott, &c.; and the young Early Workers can see every detail of the execution their sharp manipulation brings about, and can be delighted and encouraged by its directness and neat accuracy. How different is this to the chapel of William Caxton! There the thick-built walls, with sloping cut at only rare intervals to lead to the narrow open slit, allowed only semi-darkness everywhere, except at the hours and seasons when the sun poured in, focussed, with almost detrimental glare. And a little later on, when Richard the Third succeeded Caxton's own king, Edward, when Henry the Seventh and Henry the Eighth followed, and printing, extending itself, had grown out so that it was obliged to have larger buildings and more "practisers," even by then all the light that civilisation had learnt to get was crampingly little. There were windows, it is true; but—like for lords and commons, yeomen, other artificers, and the rest—the windows of printing-offices were of the pressmen's own familiar paper; and it can be pictured how very unfair was the light that could creep in through those. And there was to be no candle burnt to better this, except in certain months in the year, by Medean

chapel law—a chapel, it may be explained, being rigidly papal in constitution, as it had been papal by birth and fostering; it could do no wrong, and could submit to no demur. At Bartholomew-tide a journeyman might have the comfort of a candle—not an hour sooner. At Bartholomew-tide, too, which comes at the end of the year, when daylight lessens and fogs grow, and when any help to seeing becomes doubly valuable, journeymen had to renew their paper windows; had to tear out the old weather-stained and weather-tattered paper, and to paste in new—making the little Early Workers amongst them do it, most likely. And, thinking of this dimly-lighted period—getting into it, as it were, with its strictly-limited candle-using and curiously-autocratic power—contrasting it, too, with the light and bright circumstances under which the Early Workers carry on their operations; is it at all wonderful that old superstition reigned in the old time, and that a ghost was thought (and felt) to haunt every printing-chapel, with definite influence and work for its ghostly doing? The ghost was there—let the wonder come or not. Its name was Ralph; its mission was to ensure by supernatural agency (or repute) that the ordinations of the father of the chapel were unfalteringly carried out. Its subjects were all the members of a chapel—chapelionsians was their right name—these were fined if they threw type at one another; if they took away each other's press-balls; if they left the blanket on the press tympan; if they fought, swore, got drunk, gave the lie, left their candles burning at night, and so on; if they paid the fine, or "solace," imposed upon them for the offence, all went well; but if they did not pay, or otherwise attend, Ralph was invoked, and Ralph answered to the ominous invocation. He walked; and as his walk had curious stepping to it, it led him to hide the offender's composing-stick, to take away his galleys, to cut his page-cords, to misplace his "sorts," to order him to be "sent to Coventry," and, finally, to be smoked out by brimstone matches, when a lighted match was held, one by each man, who surrounded the offender's frame, keeping him in the midst, and singing mock dirges or (by the book) "a doleful ditty."

It will be clearly collected, by now, that printing of the jobbing division—including auctioneers' catalogues, billheads, pamphlets, cards, &c.—can be carried on by

children—under a well-qualified master—efficiently. This limitation will always have to exist, however. It is not meant to be advanced here that children can ever be rapid enough, in hand or mind, for the swift issue of newspapers, of which branch of the business there was, curiously, an old Conservative disdain, exemplified in one part of the legacy left a century since by William Bowyer, which was "To a Compositor of good life and conversation, who shall not have worked on a newspaper or magazine for four years before his nomination, nor shall ever afterwards;" Bowyer himself having been the well-known printer to the Lords and Commons, besides printer of the Parliament Rolls, and author to boot. Neither is it meant to be advanced that children can ever be responsible enough, in mind or hand, for books. There is the special difficulty to be met of imposing (effected on a large iron table; which is the altar as it were of the Caxtonian chapel) the moment that "matter" has to be printed on paper that must be folded. Imposing means the manner and the method in which pages in type are arranged to form a sheet, so that the pages shall read consecutively; it can be comprehended if a number of this journal be opened, and the "dodging" numbering of the pages be noted; and though this difficulty exists, of course, in any work that covers as few even as four pages, it is the multiplication of this difficulty that puts it beyond the small powers of a child. Reprints, possibly, could be mastered entirely by Early Workers. It is said by William Savage, the author previously quoted, that "in reprints a man has only to arrange letter for letter, point for point, and line for line, on which employment he may whistle, sing, talk, or laugh, without inconvenience;" and these lively recommendations would manifestly agree so excellently with little boys, that it brings the wish to set them to whistle and sing, and laugh and talk, immediately. But when we recollect the difficulty of setting up from bad manuscript, of the higher departments of a printer's duty, it is certain that at bookwork children's qualifications would be of no avail. Take spelling. Printers rule a great deal of this; by printers, in combination, let it be remembered, much of the uncertainty of spelling, i.e. as much as is needed of spelling reform, could be remedied very speedily, a proof of which is to be found in work so carefully executed as the Bible.

Four sets of Bible printers, viz: the Queen's, Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh, by a list published in the year 1841, had their editions varying in the points of one l or two l's in befel, reversing their practices over one l or two in befall; were at variance also in cuckoo and cuckow; in briars and briers; in fetcht and fetched; in freeman and free man and free-man—exhausting that point successfully, however much room there might be for more diversity elsewhere; by phonetic torture in hounshold and household, in lothe and loathe, razor and razor, wagons and waggons, villainously and villanously, and very many words more; and where Authorised and University printers act upon opposite principles it would undoubtedly take much more than a young Early Worker to make these principles agree. Yet, as far as the mere printing is concerned—the act, that is, of impressing—those nimble little schoolboys who were seen to lay on to the machine, to take off, and to turn, might just as well have been operating on a sermon as a sensation novel, on a science disquisition in a stiff volume, as on a note-size handbill, announcing that poodle Nellie had strayed away, and ten shillings reward would be paid when she was brought home. It is all one. The young compositors bring the forme, complete and ready; it is secured on the machine; the young printers arrange it; give a turn; and all is done. They have no jurisdiction over capital or comma, over width of spacing or ornamental scroll. And let this distinction between them and compositors (early and adult) be kept a broad distinction, and not allowed to pass quite out of sight.

FOUNTAIN VIOLET.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

DURING our absence from the busier haunts of men, there had occurred in London an incident unexampled in its nature, and destined to exercise considerable influence on our future lot.

Mr. Lewcraft, who had never within the memory of any of his neighbours been known to leave Fountain Violet except to put to sea, suddenly appeared in the metropolis, and presented himself to the astonished gaze of his solicitor and agent, Mr. Tobias Earwaker, Cophthall-court, City-rents.

Why did Mr. Earwaker turn so pale, and grip the arms of his office-chair as if

he had been confronted by a spectre? To say truth, his old client's appearance was not reassuring. White and worn, with a harassing cough, and a strange, wistful glitter in his restless eyes; clad in a long brown coat, threadbare, and hanging about his attenuated frame like that on a scarecrow, Mr. Lewcraft stood there, the very personification of the eager, wealthy, but dying miser, clinging to the last to his idol, gold, yet fearfully conscious that it must, within the briefest space, be to him less, or worse, than nothing.

Nor, when my uncle spoke, was the hoarse, sepulchral voice—theretofore not unpleasant, and full of the melody of money—out of keeping with his changed exterior.

Mr. Earwaker, recovering himself, rose hastily:

"My dear, good sir! this is indeed a pleasant surprise!"

"Perhaps, Earwaker, the pleasure may be diminished when I——" A cough interrupted the speaker, and he sank into a chair.

"Aha! how is that, my good friend?" asked the lawyer, in whose voice a slight tremor might be detected. "By-the-way, how well you are looking!"

"If what is called 'daylight,' in Cophthall-court, gave you any title to judge of a man's looks, I should say you were a flatterer, Earwaker," croaked my uncle. "Tut, man! you may read death in my face. But to business. I am here, Earwaker, to tender you my very sincere acknowledgments for the ability and integrity with which you have managed my numerous investments, and to relieve you of all further duties respecting them."

"I was in hopes, sir, that your visit was rather with the intention of adding to them," said the lawyer. "Curiously enough, I had been just examining a list, newly prepared for your inspection, of—I really think—the very soundest and most promising——"

"No matter," interrupted Mr. Lewcraft. "My mind is fully made up. I am about to realise every shilling."

"You don't say so!" ejaculated the other, with a sort of gasp, as of one who has received a shower-bath. "But, sir, the prices——"

"I'll take my chance. Everything sold for the next account. You will merely hand over the scrip, etcetera."

"I should surely watch my opportunity, sir."

"Don't I tell you, my good friend, the thing is done?" asked my uncle, with some impatience. "Everything is sold for the next account; here is a duplicate list." And he produced a paper wherein every description of stock, shares, &c., in Earwaker's custody, belonging to Mr. Lewcraft, was noted down in very clerly fashion indeed.

"Sold!" echoed the lawyer, faintly. "You have then already instructed Bilkham——?"

"Passing his office, I thought I might as well save you that trouble," said Mr. Lewcraft, indifferently.

"I shall, of course, observe your directions. But, excuse me, my good friend, have you reflected on the serious loss of income? So much money—let us, at a rough guess, call it sixty thousand—lying dead, sir, dead!" remonstrated the lawyer.

"What is dead is beyond misfortune, Earwaker," said my uncle, with a grin so peculiar and sinister that it almost appalled the other. "Banks break, stocks fall, schemes collapse, men rob. For whatever time is left me here, I will know no banker but myself."

"My dear sir, you astonish me."

"Prepare to be still more astonished," said my uncle, quietly. "Be good enough to remit to me the proceeds of these several sales, as far as practicable, in specie."

"In specie! Sixty thous——"

"If you will be the bearer yourself, Earwaker," said Mr. Lewcraft, with grim politeness, "you will be a welcome visitor—my first—to Fountain Violet."

"Mad, or a miser?" pondered the lawyer, bowing his thanks, with a troubled smile.

"One last surprise for you, Earwaker," resumed my uncle. "I have made my will."

"Not, I trust, without professional aid, my dear sir? Take heed. You know the proverb!"

"I could not consult you, for a reason," replied Mr. Lewcraft, apologetically. "Providence has, you know, left me singularly bare of those not unmixed blessings, blood-relations. There remains but one, my nephew, Adolphus Sweetlove, between whom and myself little correspondence has been wasted, and no love lost at all. That young gentleman, possessing nothing himself, has lately married a young lady of equal fortune. He wrote, not seeking my approval, but coolly advising

me of his intended marriage. My acknowledgment was brief, almost epigrammatic," said my uncle, with a hoarse chuckle. "The parties married, and are, I conclude, subsisting on the hope that a relationless old uncle, in despair of better channels for his posthumous wealth, might bequeath a portion to them. It was natural. I could not bring myself wholly to disappoint these anticipations. Now this nephew of mine is a fine gentleman—is what is now recognised, I am informed, in courtly circles, as a swell. Well, sir, I have a yacht, a fine vessel, that has cost me," continued Mr. Lewcraft, with a wry face, "much, and is, from the secret of construction she carries about with her, more valuable than anything of her tonnage afloat. I left Adolphus my yacht, bequeathing all else that I possess to——to——"

My uncle paused, and slowly extended his hand. As the other took it, his heart seemed to stand still. There was no mistaking Mr. Lewcraft's tone.

"Yes," resumed the latter, pressing the lawyer's cold thin digits affectionately. "Yes, Earwaker, my friend of thirty years, to whose sound advice my financial prosperity is mainly due; who, better than yourself, would have earned this proof of friendship?"

"Would have!" thought Earwaker with a shiver.

"However, on reconsidering the matter, I judged it more expedient to apply a test. Dividing my possessions as I intended, I have reserved to Captain Sweetlove the option of taking either yacht or mansion, with the contents of either, as his taste may suggest. And I think I can guess what will be his decision! Ha! my time is up. Within a few days, then, Earwaker, I shall look for you, you human argosy, at Fountain Violet."

With these words, my uncle took his leave.

"I think I could hazard a guess as to that gentleman's errand!" was the frank remark of another client of Mr. Earwaker's, who had been biding his time in the ante-room. It was young Pogson, a medical man, who had just purchased a practice in the neighbourhood.

"The deuce you could! And what?"

"To execute his last will and testament!" said Mr. Pogson, poking his friend and legal adviser playfully in the ribs. "That man has not three months to live."

Mr. Earwaker looked at him, but made no reply.

Pogson's business was despatched as quickly as civility permitted, and, dismissing his easy-mannered friend, the lawyer sank back in his chair, and strove to realise the position in which he found himself placed. It was, as will be seen, a strange and critical one.

Earwaker was the son and successor of a solicitor of good repute, who bequeathed to him a considerable practice, relating chiefly to matters connected with commerce and finance. The younger man, while inheriting most of his father's business qualities, possessed one failing which the latter had not—ambition. Debarred by circumstances from a higher career, he saw his road to social distinction only through the acquisition of wealth—commanding wealth. To this object he had devoted his life, his moneyed connection furnishing many an opportunity for those daring operations which, if successful, lay the foundation of a mighty fortune, if they do not achieve it at a stroke. More than once, he had held the prize he aimed at almost in his grasp. But reverse almost always followed victory. Nay, a series of mishaps would sometimes reduce his accumulated gains almost to where they began. Wearied at length with fortune's caprices, Earwaker—losing his habitual coolness and caution—connected himself with a scheme which, successful at first, began to falter and lose ground under the pressure of difficulties, against which no human foresight could have provided. Money—a little more money—and all would be well. Nay, the result was certain—so, at least, said all concerned. The little money was supplied, became more, very much more, and by this time it had grown to be a question of sink or swim. More than one faint heart sought to adopt a middle course, and, abandoning the ship, greatly augmented her peril. Still, the position was not desperate, provided only that assistance was immediate and effectual. All eyes turned towards the man who had been the chief promoter of the undertaking—the shrewd financier, Earwaker. That gentleman's resources, though far from equal to the claim now made upon them, represented no inconsiderable amount, but these could not be realised on the instant, and the necessity would not brook an hour's delay. In a fatal moment, the hitherto honest man fell into temptation. The much-needed money was obtained,

but it was at the cost of Mr. Earwaker's conscience, and on the security of every fraction of Mr. Lewcraft's property—between fifty and sixty thousand pounds—then in his agent's custody. No wonder if, at my uncle's apparition, Mr. Earwaker looked a little disturbed!

And now what was to be done? Through what would have been a very dismal cloud indeed, the lawyer thought he saw a gleam of light. According to his client's statement, the latter had, by his will, virtually given his nephew the choice of fortune or yacht! Now, probably, no man on earth—save Earwaker himself—knew of what that fortune consisted. Certainly, his nephew did not. What if, realising his uncle's expectation, perhaps his wish—the young man preferred the handsome, well-appointed yacht, to the dreary, impoverished-looking edifice on the bleak hill, and such poor property as was likely to be found there? But hold. Conscience! Was he not bound to apprise the young man of the wealth within his very grasp? In that case—ruin. Suppression was not falsehood, not always treachery. At all events, call it in this case both, what was it in comparison with the crime of which he had already been guilty? No—there was no escape. With a deep-drawn sigh—farewell tribute to integrity—Mr. Earwaker accepted what seemed his doom.

I must condense details. The first essential object was the redemption of the deposited securities. With a heavy heart, and at a tremendous sacrifice, Earwaker converted into money the whole of his own remaining property, realising some thirty thousand pounds. With the aid of a city friend, and a further heavy sacrifice, he contrived to raise the remainder, twenty-five thousand, thus placing himself in a position to release the securities, and to complete, in due course, the bargains entered into by his principal.

"All this risk, loss, and anxiety, to gratify a miser's whim!" muttered Mr. Earwaker ungratefully, and returning worn out from his broker's, he sank wearily into his chair.

A little surprise awaited my uncle on his return to Fountain Violet. Upon his table lay a letter from the secretary of the local yacht club, in which that gentleman, after apprising Mr. Lewcraft of the approaching regatta, expressed the hope of the committee that he, Mr. Lewcraft, would compete for a prize cup of one hundred pounds, limited, it was politely added, to

vessels of from forty to forty-five tons, chiefly with the view of inducing Mr. Lewcraft to enter his fine cutter Cockatoo for the race.

"We must spot his new dodge," the chairman of the committee had observed frankly. "Let's entice the beggar out. Offer a jug of sovs. That'll fetch him, if anything will."

Ill and fatigued as he was, my uncle—so his servants reported—appeared for the moment to regain health and strength, as he read this civil letter. His eyes sparkled with delight, and though, at one passage he grinned sardonically, it was evident that the writer's object was achieved.

"Send Bob Grantham," said my uncle, regaining his composure.

That veteran appeared. Hirsute alike in aspect and attire, Mr. Grantham looked like a tame bear walking on its hind legs, the resemblance being favoured by his speech, which was, to speak more strictly, growl. Few but his familiars could readily interpret Bob Grantham.

"How goes your work, Bob?" asked my uncle eagerly.

Bob sounded a bass note, signifying "Finished."

"Ready for——?"

This time, a long, low rumble, like a train in a tunnel, intimated that it only awaited the gov'nor's final instructions.

"Good. I enter for the cutter-race a month hence," said my uncle. "We'll take the shine out of some of them, ha, Bob?"

Mr. Grantham was seized with a chuckle that shook his shaggy frame from head to foot. As this, with Bob, was somewhat unusual, Mr. Lewcraft waited with some curiosity for the next growl. When it came, the mysterious substance can only be interpreted as:

"Wot odds, gov'nor—so long's they leaves the shine in we?"

This joke—for joke it evidently was—Mr. Lewcraft received with an approving smile, and forthwith, looking, now that his momentary excitement was over, very wan and weary, retired to rest.

My uncle had returned, even after that brief absence, much changed and enfeebled. It was perhaps for that reason that, during the succeeding week or ten days, he scarcely visited his beloved Cockatoo, contenting himself with giving Bob Grantham special orders as to the selection of the half-a-dozen hands who

were to form her crew under Bob in the coming race.

The next incident I have to record was the arrival at Fountain Violet of Mr. Earwaker's confidential clerk, in charge of sundry chests, of no great size, but of unusual strength and weight, of which, it was noted, he declined to lose sight; he was the bearer of apologies from his principal, who was at the moment too unwell to travel, and also of twenty-five thousand pounds in specie, besides several thousands more in notes.

"Hang it!" Mr. Earwaker had muttered, out of patience, "he must take the balance in paper. It's all the easier to hide, and, if he intends to use old sofa-cushions and invalided crockery as his future depositories, far more eligible."

After the arrival and dismissal of the auriferous messenger, Mr. Lewcraft was observed to rally somewhat, notwithstanding that his nights seemed disturbed. Old Louisa, the cook ("Squeezer") and Maypole Moll could often hear the old man prowling stealthily about the house at untimely hours, apparently with some object beside exercise, for he was heard opening cupboards, sounding panels, fumbling about the stoves, &c., sometimes not returning to rest till dawn.—He now crept down to his yacht every day, and was engaged with Bob Grantham, and another old selected seadog, very like Bob, but shaggier, in perfecting the invention that was to make the Cockatoo renowned for aye. Both the seadogs now dwelt on board, and so determined was Mr. Lewcraft that no one should surprise his secret, that the men kept alternate watches, and were armed.

During this time, my uncle made several excursions into the town, usually visiting the local bank, and always using a carriage, having now grown too weak to return on foot up the hill. So deathlike was his look, that Louisa alarmed, took counsel with Mr. Grantham and Maypole Moll, and with the concurrence of those advisers, expressed her fears, by letter to Mr. Earwaker and myself, that her master would shortly be found dead in his chair or bed. It now wanted but three days to the regatta.

The important day opened brightly, with all the stir and flutter belonging to such occasions. Some minor matches came off with effect, but the great interest centred in the cutter-match, fixed to start at noon.

Long before that hour, six of the seven competitors were at their moorings, the seventh buoy remaining so long unoccupied, that doubts began to arise whether, after all, the Cockatoo would put in an appearance. However, at half-past eleven, that vessel was seen to issue majestically from her cove, and take up her position. All acknowledged her to be a magnificent specimen of her class, sitting like a queen upon the water, and looking every inch a winner.

As the committee's boat, according to custom, pulled alongside, Mr. Lewcraft, who, though now very ill, had insisted on accompanying the race, was seen reclining on a pallet, on deck. Conditions of the match having been formally explained, my uncle's visitors paid him a deserved compliment on the fine appearance of his yacht, receiving in return a gracious and wholly unexpected invitation to come on board and inspect her. Eagerly accepting it, the gentlemen dived below, and quickly returned, with faces of genuine astonishment.

"My dear Mr. Lewcraft," said one, "you are, of course, the best judge of your vessel's trim, but, permit us to ask, are you not something short of ballast? Your space and head room are marvellous. It is to be hoped that you have not sacrificed stability to convenience. Unless I am mistaken," the speaker added, glancing to windward, "there will be weather enough to try the stiffest of you!"

"Gentlemen, you will see," was Mr. Lewcraft's only response, as he bowed them farewell.

The sea, meanwhile, had been increasing, and the wind freshened so rapidly as to amount, before the starting-gun was fired, to half a gale. Such was the threatening aspect of things, that all the yachts, except the Cockatoo and her next neighbour, the Dione, struck their topsails before the start.

Bang! Open flew white acres of canvas, and away bowled the yachts, the Cockatoo last, and taking it so easy that, but for the death's-head and cross-bones—my uncle's lively racing colours—still flying aloft, she might be thought only a spectator. Her crew, all of the Bob Grantham type, could be seen lounging rather than bustling about the deck; nevertheless, she was seamanly handled, appeared, despite her large topsail, as stiff as a house, and, long before the storm-mist shut the race from view, had left her nearest competitor full half-a-mile astern.

At two o'clock on that day, Mr. Earwaker, looking very pale and anxious, made his appearance at Fountain Violet, to learn with great surprise (I would not give it a worse name), that his supposed dying friend was sailing a stormy match on the high seas!

Had Captain Sweetlove arrived? On being assured that he had not, Mr. Earwaker composed himself, and took some luncheon. An interesting colloquy then ensued between himself and Squeezer, in which the latter detailed with great minuteness her master's recent condition and doings; his failing intellect, his nocturnal wanderings, his snatches of feverish rest during the day, in which exclamations might be heard to escape him, &c.; all pointing to one and the same predominant idea. "Gold! gold!" he would mutter. "More gold! All gold, I tell you. All gold!"

"Have you, my good friend," asked Mr. Earwaker, "any reason to suppose that your poor master, whom you watch and serve with such kindness and fidelity, has been in the habit of—of concealing what money he has by him about the house, now?"

"Such, sir," replied Squeezer, "are my convictions, likeways Mayp—that is, Moll's. There ain't a hole or corner in the house not stuffed with bank-notes, gold, and silver, and what not. Bless'ee, we've heard it chinking most nights in the week!"

"It is as I thought," mused the lawyer. "The miser's fancy full upon him! Oh, might the sea but swallow him, and that before his nephew comes! With him come explanation, reconciliation, my disgrace and ruin. Ha! how the wind shakes this old place!" he went on involuntarily, as a tremendous gust howled by. "Don't ships go down in weather like this?"

Squeezer shivered, and owned that it was possible.

"I—I think I'll stroll to the cliff. The yachts, they tell me, should be returning," said Earwaker, and he went out.

Despite the weather, groups were assembled on the cliffs, eagerly watching. Few sails were visible, most of those not engaged in the race having run for shelter from the increasing gale; but in the far distance a snow-white speck, in strong relief against the black horizon, seemed to be attracting every eye.

"'Tis she, sure enough," said a coast-

guard man, examining her through his powerful glass. "Topsel's gone or struck, but—Blazes! how she travels! If she don't round that 'ere flag-boat in half-an-hour, my name's not Bill Jerdine, nor her'n Cockatoo."

Bill was a true prophet. On swept the gallant yacht in solitary grandeur. Of the rest, the Dione alone remained in the race, a mile or more astern, and with a terrific heel, while the Cockatoo sailed like a moving rock.

The report of the winning-gun was inaudible in the storm, but the flash and smoke announced the latter's victory. As she rounded the flag-boat, however, a strange thing occurred. Her distinguishing flag—the death's-head and cross-bones—which, by custom, should have been flown till sunset, was seen to sink half-mast high!

Being now in smooth water, she was quickly surrounded by boats, the excitement on shore increasing in proportion. Very soon the news was told. Bob Grantham, with sobs that shook his shaggy frame, announced that his master lay dead on the wave-washed deck.

"He had seemed werry weak," Bob explained, "but didn't complain nuffin." Half-an-hour since, however, he had beckoned Bob, and, with a very laboured utterance, bade him thank the hands for the skill and attention to duty to which he owed his victory, his last words—according to posthumous testimony—being these: "Coom wot may, Bob, you take her in a winner. Give us your hand, old friend, and now don't ye look at the guv'nor agin till you hears the winnin'-gun." "And, by jingo," added Bob, fairly bursting into tears, "when we run to him he was gone."

Not having been apprised of old Louisa's fears so quickly as Mr. Earwaker, I only reached Fountain Violet late that day. The solicitor met me on the threshold, feelingly communicated the news, and conducted me to the chamber of the dead. I had not seen my poor uncle for twenty years, and was prepared for a great change. But, no; in the calm of death those twenty years had vanished. With his closed lips and eyes the old man looked as young—I had almost said, as comely—as my dear mother's dead face had been described to me.

In the evening, after a melancholy meal in the hushed house, Mr. Earwaker suddenly addressed me:

"I fear, my dear sir, that important business will demand my presence in London to-morrow, or at latest the following day. It would, perhaps, facilitate matters were we at once to ascertain what steps should be taken in regard to your poor uncle's affairs. There is reason to suppose they will not cause us much trouble," concluded Mr. Earwaker, with a significant smile.

"Of that, you are a better judge than I," I replied innocently. "I should fancy, however, that my poor uncle expended his means chiefly on his yacht."

"Quite so. At any rate, the keeping of this old mansion must have cost him little. The land is worth something, though the site is somewhat bleak for building purposes. It cannot be worth much. We can, with your approval, proceed at once to business. Your uncle's will lies, I am told, in that cabinet, of which Louisa has found the key. Shall we examine?"

I assented, and Mr. Earwaker, with professional promptitude, selected and opened the document.

In a few lines it declared the dispositions already made known, i.e. the yacht and contents on the one part, the mansion and contents on the other; myself to have the choice.

Mr. Earwaker folded up the paper, and looked at me enquiringly.

"I know little of the value of land hereabouts, sir," I said, after a pause; "still less of the worth of a yacht; but—but this vessel, the only object in which my poor uncle took a cordial interest, seems, somehow, to commend itself to my choice."

Mr. Earwaker grasped my hand.

"The notion, my young friend, does you honour," he exclaimed warmly. "We can, then, if you think fit, join in a rough record of this little arrangement; and so clear the way for details, which I can carry out in London."

This was done. And now an impulse, as irresistible as it was unaccountable, suddenly seized me, and would not relax its hold. It urged me to go at once on board the vessel—now virtually my own—there to pass the night. Mr. Earwaker, perhaps once more approving of the sentiment that seemed to suggest this idea, made but a faint resistance. Nay, he offered himself to accompany me to the little cove and present me to the custodians of the yacht as their new master.

Although the wind was still raging, the

night was bright and clear. We were received on board by Bob Grantham and his mate, both of whom, a little to my surprise, wore pistols and carried life-preservers of formidable size; and, matters being explained, Mr. Earwaker took his leave. Worned and conscious of a curious depression, I soon retired to rest.

Next morning I was aroused early. A letter from Mr. Earwaker.

"My dear sir," he wrote, "it has just occurred to my mind that a friend and client of my own is seeking a yacht just the size of the Cockatoo. Like yourself, I am ignorant of the market value of such vessels; but, remembering that my client is rich, and accustomed to indulge his fancies, I have fixed on a price which must, I think, meet your most sanguine estimate of her value—three thousand pounds. Will you accept it? Yours, &c.,

"T. EARWAKER."

Much perplexed, I made a confidant of Bob Grantham.

"Don't yo' ha' nuffin to say to'n, guv'nor," was Bob's counsel, given with decision.

I wrote a few words, declining the offer. In half an hour I received a second note.

"On my own responsibility I increase my friend's offer to five thousand pounds. T. E."

Mr. Grantham, on being shown this, fell into such convulsions of laughter that he looked like a tipsy bear.

"Yoa say, 'Won't do,' guv'nor."

A little later, arrived a third note.

"Have telegraphed. Answer, 'Carte blanche.' Will you take ten thousand, or what? T. E."

"I'll tell 'ee what, guv'nor," growled Bob. "Come along o' me."

We descended to the hold, Bob's command following. Then the two powerful fellows laboured about the ballast till they had laid all bare to the very bottom. Within the false keel—of immense strength—lay rows upon rows of golden coin, sovereigns, amounting in number to nearly eighty thousand, and in weight little under two tons.

This was my uncle's ballast secret. I have space for but a word more.

Grace and I agreed to purchase Fountain Violet, sold at a reasonable price for the benefit of the bankrupt estate of a gentleman lately resident in Copthall-court, City-rents.

We are happy, prosperous; I trust,

deeply grateful also to the Source of all good gifts. At all events, when I look on the best of those He has bestowed on me, I feel inclined to bow my head, and—say Grace.

AMERICAN MARVELS.

"JOHN BULL," says Lowell, "has suffered the idea of the Invisible to be very much fattened out of him. Jonathan is conscious still that he lives in the World of the Unseen as well as of the Seen." A confession, we take it, that, hard-headed and practical-minded as he boasts himself to be, Brother Jonathan has more than a spice of superstition in his composition. The consciousness of living in the World of the Unseen lately influenced a New York journalist to assert that the destruction of the Brooklyn Theatre was not, as the jury found, due to carelessness and the lack of common precautions, but to its founders forgetting the well-established fact, that places of entertainment erected on consecrated ground are foredoomed to come to a grievous end. Desirous that the drama should be as well housed in Brooklyn as in the Empire city, certain citizens thereof purchased St. John's Church and burying-ground, pulled down the sacred edifice, built a handsome theatre on the site, and offered the lesseeship to Mr. and Mrs. Conway, whose good management had made the Park Theatre popular with playgoers. Mrs. Conway, "being a woman of sound, practical common sense," was convinced the desecration would be punished by disaster; but her scruples were overcome, and the new theatre started with every prospect of a prosperous career. It had not, however, been open long, ere strange things were whispered about it. Awful exhalations were said to pervade the actors' dressing-rooms, rendering them very disagreeable tiring-chambers; mysterious sounds were heard within its walls; and passers-by during the small hours told of weird shapes flitting through the doorways. Every door and window might be closely shut, but as soon as the lights were turned out of a night, the scenery flapped and cracked as though a fierce gale swept the deserted stage. While performing one evening, Mr. Conway, "a man with every indication of stalwart health and longevity," was seized with a fit, and, two weeks later, died. After struggling with misfortune for two years, his widow followed him to

the grave; raps on the walls and sighs in the air marking the hour of her dissolution. Her daughter "ran" the theatre unsuccessfully for a short time, and then the ill-starred house passed into other hands. The new stage-manager took up his abode in it, undaunted by the assurance that he would be plagued by a wandering spirit in the shape of a woman, and there he lived until burned out, without seeing any spirits, of that sort at least, in his rooms. Our newspaper philosopher, for all that, comes to the conclusion that the ill-fortune attending the Brooklyn Theatre from its opening, the unexplained noises within its walls while they were standing, and the terrible mortality attending its destruction, emphatically warn speculators of the inevitable fate awaiting theatres erected upon hallowed ground.

The ghosts walking the Brooklyn boards did their spiriting unobtrusively, and apparently with no evil intent. New Orleans owned, perhaps yet owns, a ghost whose only pleasure in death was to tempt mortals to do what Cato did, and Addison approved. When clothed in flesh, this amiable spirit was known as Ann Murphy, a little old woman, often "run in" by the police, until, tired of the exercise, she hung herself in the Fourth-precinct police-station. Since she took that "dismal road to fame," a baker's dozen of involuntary tenants of the cell in which she did the deed have followed her lead. A young girl, who was cut down just in time, upon recovering consciousness declared that while lying on the floor she was aroused by a little old woman, in a faded calico dress, bound with brown crape, "brown jeans and a josey," no stockings, and down-trodden slippers—a perfect description of the defunct Mrs. Murphy of course. The old woman made her get up, tear her dress in strips, place one end of a strip round her neck, tie the other to the window-bars, and lift her feet from the floor. After that all was a blank until she opened her eyes and saw the doctor bending over her, when she comprehended what she had done. Other lodgers in the cell, who were not suicidally disposed, complained of being bothered by an old woman, so the authorities resolved to test the matter. A tramp strange to the city was soon caught and lodged in the haunted cell. Being tired and worn out he fell asleep immediately, but in a very little time he rushed into the office uncommonly wide awake, vowing he would

not stop another minute in the place; for he, too, had received a visit from Mrs. Murphy, and had no desire to improve the acquaintanceship.

One morning in 1862, The New York Times treated readers of its Shipping News with this singular item: "Newport, 22nd Oct. The Usk, bound for Coquimbo, has put back. She had been out five months, and fetched latitude fifty-five degrees three minutes. The vessel is all right, but the master persuaded the crew to return here in consequence of having seen a vision." The freak cost the skipper his certificate. He might with reason deem himself an ill-used man, if he lived to hear how another merchant captain won praise and reward by trusting, as he had done, "the mockery of unquiet slumbers." On the 24th of November, 1875, the brigantine Fred-Eugene, of Portland, U.S., left Bordeaux for Key West. On the night of the 29th, her captain dreamed he saw a number of men in peril, from which it was in his power to rescue them. He got up, ordered a sharp lookout to be kept, and turned in again, to dream the same dream. This sent him on deck once more, but he could see nothing for the darkness of the night; nevertheless, he put the vessel a couple of points nearer the wind, and waited for daylight. As soon as it dawned, Captain Smalley went aloft, and some distance to windward descried a ship flying a signal of distress. Although the wind was blowing hard, he clapped on more sail and beat to windward; but finding he only gained on one tack to lose on the next, he made a long stretch, hoping the stranger might drift towards him. After the lapse of a considerable time, three boats were seen pulling for the brigantine, and Captain Smalley had the pleasure of welcoming on board twenty-five men belonging to the Sparkenhoe of Dublin, which they had abandoned in a sinking condition. Immediately afterwards a terrific gale set in. It lasted four days, but the good ship weathered the storm, and upon its abating, shaped her course for Gibraltar, and landed the strangely-saved seamen. Through heeding his dream, Captain Smalley lost twenty-seven days, but he won for himself a gold chronometer and the thanks of the British Government.

The son of a butcher in Franklin, Massachusetts, dreamed that his father had been suffocated in the ice-safe. On awaking, he made his way down-

stairs with all speed. The old man was not there, and no one had seen anything of him. Going to the ice-safe, he discovered his father all but dead within. He had been making the round of the premises early in the morning and gone inside the safe, when the door swinging to, shut fast with its spring-lock, and he was only saved from death by his son's dream bringing about its own non-fulfilment. When Adam Wagner, of 180, Second-street, New York, beheld in his sleep a huge black board, bearing the figures 10—11—75, that ardent devotee of "policy"—whatever that may be—thought himself a lucky fellow, and lost no time in finding a policy-shop, and putting his pile, just one-and-three-quarter dollars, upon those numbers. Sure enough they proved the winning ones, and Adam congratulated himself upon being the richer by two hundred and sixty dollars; but, alas for human expectations! upon calling for the money, the rascally Pfeiffer would not pay up, as we are told "is almost always the way in such cases;" and although the exasperated gambler had the satisfaction of seeing the policy-shop keeper committed for trial, that did not console him for the loss of his stake, and having wasted such a very "straight tip."

If a man's ancestors have neglected to provide him with a ghost, a banshee, or some such honourable appendage, it is something to have a curse in the family. Sixty years ago a beautiful dark-eyed maiden lost her sight when just out of her teens, and was forced to beg for subsistence. Calling one day at a house in Dorchester County, Massachusetts, two of the boys volunteered to lead her to a place where she would be liberally treated; but, taking her into a swamp, they left her there to perish of hunger and cold, but not before she had prayed Heaven to punish her betrayal by rendering the descendants of her treacherous guides as helpless as she was; and ever since, every male born into that family has become blind between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, "as hundreds of persons in Dorchester County will verify." Dorchester boys wisely give blind beggars a wide berth. May the fate of the amiable and gifted Miss Boomershine, of Phillips County, who died in 1874, under very peculiar circumstances, be as well remembered by girls inclined to unnatural appetites. The lady in question had contracted the bad habit of eating clay from

the roadside. In this particular summer the grasshoppers came out in great force, and deposited their eggs everywhere. Miss Boomershine all at once gave up clay-eating, and took to nibbling blades of corn, leaves of trees, dog-fennel, and other weeds, and declared she felt as if she could take wing and fly away. Growing alarmed at this new eccentricity, her friends called in Dr. Ledue, who pronounced his patient to be labouring under an hallucination. She continued in the same state until the grasshoppers showed signs of seeking fresh fields, when she took to watch them from the window, while her relatives were as anxiously watching her. One day, she rushed out of the house, flapped her arms as though they were wings, rose about ten feet in the air, and fell to the ground, dead! A post-mortem examination revealed that "within, she was literally swarming with grasshoppers."

Lovers are not apt at looking far ahead, or Timothy Bradlee, of Trumbull County, Ohio, would have thought twice ere he wooed the fair triplet, Eunice Mowery, daughter of a pair of twins, and granddaughter of a matron who filled her husband's quiver by five successive double contributions. Timothy, however, was too anxious to become the proprietor of two hundred and seventy-three pounds' weight of beauty to calculate possibilities, and paid the penalty of his rashness; finding himself twice hailed as a father of twins, by way of preliminary to being presented, in the sixth year of his married life, with five girls and three boys. Whatever Mr. Bradlee may have thought of this compound multiplication of olive branches, Mrs. Bradlee accepted the situation with more serenity than was displayed by Rebecca Duhling at the coming of a single boy; but he was "such a boy as never was," a posthumous pledge of affection, that caused his parent to weep because her babe was not like unto other babes. When six weeks old he was more like an ape than a human being; his head was unnaturally large, his eyes unnaturally bright, and his teeth as well developed as those of a man. Mrs. Duhling was a Jewish washerwoman, and lived in an old tenement-house in Ridge-street, New York. Returning home one evening from her work, she was startled by her little daughter complaining that her charge had been sitting up and talking, and, going to the cradle, was saluted by its precocious occupant with,

"Mother, why did you go away and leave me so long?" Not knowing what else to do she sent for the rabbi, who listened incredulously to her story, until the subject of it rebuked his unbelief by crying out, "I could tell you a great deal that you don't know. Ask me much and I will tell you much. Ask me little and I will tell you little. I know more about this world and the next than you know, or ever can learn!" This was too much for the rabbi's endurance. He had taken care to bring with him the emblems of priesthood—two small black leather cases, an inch and a half square, containing pieces of parchment inscribed with certain verses from Deuteronomy. One of these he fastened on the child's forehead, the other on his left arm; then, touching each in turn with the forefinger of the right hand, the rabbi laid his finger on the boy's forehead. The infant immediately laid himself down and died—out of chagrin at the priest's performing the rite for casting out devils; at least, that was the way the wife of "a religious and intelligent Hebrew cigar-dealer" accounted for its sudden demise. When an enquiring journalist interviewed Rabbi Hirsch, that gentleman expressed great regret for the "wonder-child's" death, but declared its utterances were quite unintelligible to him, although apparently understood by Mrs. Dahling, whose truthfulness he had no reason to doubt. The child certainly spoke, but how it came to possess the power to do so he could not tell, unless its brain had been unnaturally developed by the administration of hydrate of chloral, which had been given to it by the doctor's direction. Andrew Jackson Davis, "the head and front of the spiritualists in the United States," had no difficulty in solving the mystery. By the indescribable and subtle means of spiritual magnetism, the spirits of the departed get possession of the mortal bodies of persons now on earth, and hold possession of them as long as they think fit; and a babe could easily be thus endued with mediumistic powers, and its innocent prattle charged with intelligent words and sentences. Hoping to elicit a little more information about this interesting marvel of precocity, our friend the reporter paid a second visit to Ridge-street, only to learn that Mrs. Dahling had quietly departed, without leaving word where she might be found; but he had the gratification of being informed by a gentleman on the

second floor, that the widow had run away to avoid being pestered by newspaper men and other inquisitive people.

If we may believe *The New York Ledger*, a wild cat and her six kittens lately besieged a house in Michigan, and kept the family prisoners for several hours. No wonder, then, that the folks of the Shelton Laurel district of North Carolina fortified their domiciles against such a formidable foe as the "mountain monster," of which Mr. George Anderson gave the following account in *The Jonesboro' Advertiser*: "I was out in the jungle hunting up some lost hogs, when all of a sudden there came into my path a beast, the appearance of which, I must confess, caused me to quake for the first time for many years. And, apart from its strange and unearthly appearance, the yell it uttered on perceiving me, which reverberated and reverberated through the forest, was enough to shake the senses of the most daring adventurer. The animal was some hundred yards distant from me, and appeared to be a huge black bear, with mane and head like a lion, but had horns like an elk upon it. Its tail was long and bushy, with dark and light rings around it to its very extremity. Its eyes gleamed like a panther's, and its size was that of an ordinary ox, but somewhat longer. I set about reloading my rifle, but had scarcely begun when it started towards me. I retreated in as good order as possible, and must say I did some good running, not looking back until I had reached an open spot, when I found the animal had disappeared in the laurel thickets." It is very provoking that strange creatures, such as this mountain monster and the sea-serpent, never show themselves to any one able and willing to try conclusions with them, and by putting them out of existence prove their existence beyond a doubt.

The North Carolinian nondescript was suspected of having as great a liking for mutton in the wool as the wolves of Illinois, cunning brutes, that "smell a rat" as quickly as they nose a sheep. A farmer one day discovered seven wolf pups ensconced in a hollow log. He dug a hole at the open end of the log, placed a trap in it, and covered it with earth. Determined the wolf should not escape by gnawing off her own foot or leg when caught, he kept watch with a companion and some dogs. Some time during the night the sire of the interesting family

housed in the log came near enough to the watchers to tempt the dogs giving fruitless chase, but he never approached the hidden trap. Upon examining the log in the morning, the trap was found unsprung, but the cubs had vanished. While Monsieur Wolf was amusing the dogs and their masters, Madame had made a hole through the side of the log and carried off her little ones to another hiding-place a mile away, where they were found snugly lodged under a heap of leaves. If the Illinois wolves know something of the principles of strategy, the bears of New Hampshire are just as remarkable for their appreciation of the advantages of unity of action and division of labour; for when bent upon orchard robbing, one bear, we are assured, climbs the tree and shakes down the fruit, while the others gather up the plunder! If the mute creation, as Erskine insisted they should be called, go on advancing in intelligence at this rate, we shall soon have to unlearn all that the classics of Natural History have taught us of their habits and characteristics, and relegate many a long-cherished belief to the limbo of exploded errors. The prospect is not a pleasing one, but it is some comfort to know that one creature at least is not disposed to alter its ways.

"There's a popular delusion about ostriches that I'd like you to straighten out," said a sub-keeper of the Central Park Menagerie to a gentleman on the staff of The New York Sun—at least, so that gentleman avers. "Most people think that the ostrich can eat anything. Goodness! there's as much difference in ostriches' appetites as in men's. Now, there's a bird there that eats nothing but railroad spikes; eats a keg a month, about three pounds and a half a day. Not much, to be sure, but spikes is very staying food; not expensive, but yet at the same time very filling. That ostrich next to him I'd like to bust with this club! He's the most particular bird on the premises; won't eat anything but horse-nails. I've tried time and again to get him off on cut-nails—good deal cheaper, you know—but it's no use. That tall bird walking this way lives on assorted hardware—brackets, door-knobs, jack-knives, padlocks, and the like. And so they go. Just as whimsical in their appetites as any human. Yes, they are sick sometimes. That spike bird got so last summer he couldn't raise his

wings, lost his appetite completely, and one spell we thought he'd walk off and never come back. But we doctored him up, and gave him light, nutritious food—shingle-nail porridge and carpet-tack gruel, and now and then some little delicacy like scrap-iron soup, and he came round all right; and then we tapered him up on brads and assorted nails, and finally got him on to spikes again, and now he's the ruggedest bird in the Park. I suppose that ostrich could eat more spikes in a day than a tracklayer could drive. Oh, no! don't you let anybody stuff you with the idea that an ostrich can eat anything. He's a hardy bird, but mighty particular about his diet."

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER V. NO NEWS IS BAD NEWS.

THE days went by, but they brought no news of Paul Riel.

"He promised to write," Doris repeated over and over again. "It was almost the last word he said to me. Why has he not written? Something serious must have happened to prevent his writing. Basil, what do you think has happened?"

What could I say?

It distressed me to see the expression of blank despair that seemed settling upon her face. At first she was animated by expectation; there was something to hope for—her first letter from her husband. Eagerly she looked for the postman; watched him pass from house to house; listened for his rapid footsteps and his brisk knock. But as he went on his way, bringing her no tidings of her Paul, her face wore a wincing look, painful shadows clouded her brow, her pallid lips twitched, and the tears trembled in her eyes. "Still no letter," she repeated. "Yet he promised faithfully to write. Something serious has happened. Basil, what has become of Paul?" And then she sat waiting, waiting, until the postman came round again. There was a flickering of hope as he neared the house, and for awhile the light shone in her eyes once more, only to die out again, as to-day proved to be as yesterday, and no news of Paul came to her.

It was in vain I tried to comfort her. "No news is good news," I said.

"No news is bad news," she answered quickly, with a piteous smile and a weary sigh.

Her state seriously alarmed me. Her strength seemed to be declining, her health giving way rapidly. It was necessary to seek medical assistance.

The doctor prescribed the conventional remedies of rest and quiet, and change of scene, if that was possible. He told us what we already knew, that the patient was suffering from over-anxiety, from excess of mental distress. Some soothing and strengthening medicines he administered; but, as he said, he could not reach the origin of the malady to remove it. In truth he could not minister to a mind diseased.

At my solicitation, or rather at the first hint from me that she could be of the slightest service to Doris, Catalina visited the sufferer, was indeed unremitting in kind and sympathetic attendance upon her.

Mr. Grisdale was urgent that Doris should be brought to his house in Somers-town, so that she might be constantly under the care of Catalina, and further that she might be relieved of the expense of her lodging in the New-road. Her resources were already greatly reduced, and it did not seem well that she should be living alone and apart from us, unprotected, in her weakened and sorrowful state, so young and fair as she was too.

"It's a rough place," he said, "and it's what is called a poor neighbourhood, and we're plain people, but she'll be heartily welcome. I shall count it an honour her coming among us; and our little Lina will do all she can to help and comfort the poor ailing one; and there could not be a gentler nurse, with a lighter or tenderer hand, whether to bind up wounds or to pour in oil and wine; and her pretty smile and her sweet voice will be like cheery sun-rays falling upon a bed of suffering. Let the poor little wife come to us in Somers-town. After all, you know, she found a home there once, as you all did, not so very long ago. Why it seems only yesterday that you were three children playing together in the back-yard of poor Mr. Doubleday's house, next door to mine—climbing up the water-butt and looking over the wall—and Lina, here, was a mere mite of a thing, dancing about with her skipping-rope, or talking to her canary bird. Well, well,

times are changed; but Somers-town is much what it has always been. It isn't very clean to look at, for we're sparing there of the luxuries of new paint and whitewash; and its back-yards must be pronounced squalid and scrubby, without doubt; and there's a good many poor there, and a good many struggling and striving, and hard put to it to make the two ends meet. Generally we're a hard-working lot there, but reasonably honest, and very hearty and downright altogether. But make the best of us, and take us as we are, and I don't know that there's so very much to be said against us. You know all about us, Basil; indeed, we count you one of us. Your poor sister doesn't know us so well, for she was often away, at Bath, wasn't it? though she came back when your poor father was taken from us; and I remember her perfectly, the pretty, bright, gaily-dressed little creature, with her curls in a cluster on her neck. Beg her to trust herself again amongst us. I really think it's the best thing she can do."

She had been very reluctant, at first, to quit her lodgings, lest she should miss or be late in receiving news of Paul. But hope seemed to be dying within her, or at least all active expectation had gone from her. Something of the lassitude of ill-health affected her; a dreamy haze dimmed her eyes; despair numbed her sensibilities. Acute suffering had brought in its train the nepenthe of exhaustion.

Upon my promise to call night and morning at the New-road lodgings to bring to her any letters that might come to her address there from Paul, she consented to her removal to Mr. Grisdale's abode in Ossulton-street.

There was almost an air of triumph about her reception there; Lina was so occupied with kindness. Mr. Grisdale was bustling to and fro, all excitement and gesticulation, while Uncle Junius looked on with clasped, tremulous hands, a fond, admiring smile hovering about his mouth, while sad tears were trickling down his cheeks. "The poor soul! How changed she is—how wan her face, how white her lips, how thin and transparent her hands! Yet how full of life and colour and bright beauty she was but a little while since! It was only the other night she was playing Julia—and very prettily—with that Mr. Hooton, who, between you and me, is no better than a jackass, to my thinking. There was great promise about her Julia; and now—has

it come to this? Poor child, poor child! It makes my old heart ache to look at her."

Doris bore the removal much better than we had ventured to hope she would. It was, I think, rather a relief to her to quit the New-road—to cease watching for the postman, or contemplating the dreary mason's yard, with its tombstones and teagarden statues, its monotonous carving and shaping and sawing. She was, of course, much less alone now; there were always friendly faces about her. Kindly and comforting words only reached her ears. Everything possible was done to console and encourage her, to give her ease and rest and hope.

"How familiar it all seems to me!" she said. "I thought I had forgotten Somers-town—left it behind me altogether; yet I come back to it and find I know it so well! Why, The Polygon where we lived once—where we were born, I think—is only round the corner; and beyond are the streets that used to lead straight on to the green fields and the hills of Hampstead and Highgate. Do you remember, Basil, our long walks, our rambles about the streets here, and how you were one day lost for some hours, and brought back home again by Mr. Leveridge? What children we were then! How old we seem now!—for so many things have happened since. How sad we are now! how happy we were then!—at least we seem to have been happy, looking back from a distance. Yet we had our cares, and troubles, and sufferings, which were then hard enough to endure, very likely, although they were, in truth, trifles to the trials that have come upon us since—such as I have now to bear, for instance. Basil! I often think those are the happiest who die when they are young—very young."

I had seen Nick, for I thought it important that he should be informed of poor Doris's condition. But he was not in a very sympathetic mood—at least, with his sorrow for Doris there mingled a feeling almost of rejoicing that his unfavourable view of her marriage was now confirmed by the result.

"So that foreigner's run away and left us, has he? Not exactly? Well, but it seems to me that that is just what it comes to. I can't say I am surprised. I always had the very lowest opinion of the fellow. But it's Doris's own fault, you know. She broke her engagement to marry Mr. Leveridge—an excellent match for her—and

then she must needs bolt with this Riel, a wretched Frenchman of whom nobody knows anything. I'm sorry for her, of course, because I'm her brother; but I feel all the same that it serves her right, for it's entirely her own doing. She's brought all the mischief on herself. Of course he hadn't a halfpenny—Frenchmen never have. I daresay he grew tired of her; and I should not be at all surprised to hear that he had half-a-dozen other wives dispersed about the Continent. This comes of marrying a foreigner! I could have told Doris beforehand how it would all end, only she would not condescend to listen to me. She never would listen to good advice. She always thought herself so much wiser than everybody else. Well, it's a very pretty kettle of fish altogether. And what's to be done now, I wonder? If I were a hard sort of man I should tell her to shift for herself—that as she's made her bed so she must lie on it, and so forth. But I'm not exactly that kind of person. I think that relations should help each other when they can. I was always in favour of our sticking together and standing by each other. It's not my fault that things have happened so differently to what I hoped and intended. I'll do what I can for Doris. She is not in absolute want, I suppose?"

"Of course not," I answered, rather warmly. "Do you suppose I should allow her to suffer absolute want?"

"You needn't be angry, Basil, because that's never any sort of use with me. I did not know. It's never considered necessary to inform me of anything. I'm always left in the dark. Doris never thinks it worth while to write to me. I did not mean that while we were talking here she was without bread to put in her mouth. I never supposed that things had come to such a very bad pass as that. But I take it that she's no more money than she knows what to do with. And as for her acting, I suppose she's quite done with that. I should hope that she feels thoroughly ashamed of herself by this time. I don't mean to say that she isn't clever. People who are supposed to be good judges tell me that she played very well. I don't mind owning that I was myself in the theatre the night she played, and that she seemed to me to do what she had to do very creditably. But, as I understand from what you say, that's all over now. She's not well and strong enough, if she were ever so much inclined,

to venture upon the stage again. Well, then, the question arises—what is she going to do, and what does she expect us to do? Does she want a weekly allowance, and how much is the allowance to be? That's the shortest way of putting the matter. But perhaps I had better see her—though all this is a very annoying interruption to business, and I had arranged to go down to Chingford to-night. Where is she to be found?"

I explained that she had been moved to Somers-town.

"Oh, she's at the Grisdales', is she?" And I noticed a change come over Nick's face. "That's awkward. I did not want to go there if I could avoid it."

"Why not?"

"Well," he said, with flushed cheeks, "I can't think that Catalina has behaved to me quite as she ought to have done, and she's rather out of my good books."

I understood then that Catalina had rejected his suit.

"Not that it really matters, you know," he went on conceitedly; "for it happens now that I am thinking of other and more advantageous arrangements."

"Well, but if it doesn't matter, why not come to see Doris at the Grisdales'?"

He consented at last to waive all objections and to call in Somers-town. I took care to assure him that his resources should not be taxed in any way in support of Doris.

"I shall do what's right," he said sternly. "Have no fear on that score. I shall not forget that Doris is my sister. If she is in need of help from me she shall have it."

Concerning the fate of Paul Riel, Nick expressed no anxiety, or even curiosity. But he stated very plainly his regret that he had never carried out his original intention of breaking every bone in the Frenchman's body.

"And mind," he said, "any assistance we may render to Doris ought to be expressly upon condition that she has nothing more to do with that foreign fellow—that she has parted from him forever. I've no notion of my money going into his pocket. Doris must give him up altogether."

"He's her husband, remember."

"Then he should have stayed here and taken care of her, and worked to provide for her. That's our English way of doing things. Why couldn't the Frenchman do the same?"

With Mr. Grisdale, I discussed all the probabilities of Paul's case—the questions why he had not written, and what had become of him. Mr. Grisdale expressed deep interest in the matter.

"My dear boy," he said, "the case presents many difficulties, no doubt. I have been devoting a good deal of attention to it. You see, we have to bear specially in mind the object of Paul's going away. He went, let us agree, upon a political mission of a desperate and dangerous character. I am aware of so much, though I don't know, and I don't want to know, the exact particulars. That he has left England is, I think, beyond question. We may grant also that he landed in France. Now let us ask ourselves, was his project and his coming known to the French authorities? Did they take measures to arrest him immediately upon his landing? That is possible, of course. The French police are most energetic and most unscrupulous. They have spies everywhere. Knowing or suspecting his purpose, they would not hesitate to lay violent hands upon the young man. Closely prisoned, he would be unable to correspond with his friends here; or if he wrote, his jailers would take very good care to intercept his letters. His silence might be so accounted for, and reasonable enough; and I should be inclined to explain the matter in that way, but for one consideration."

Mr. Grisdale paused for a moment, as though embarrassed how to express himself adequately.

"We have this to take into the account," he resumed. "If Paul was watched and suspected by the police, he was also watched and suspected by his fellow-conspirators. For it is in the nature of conspirators to distrust each other. Nor should that be counted discreditable to them. Many lives may be at stake. A great cause may be in question. Men engaged in a secret enterprise of great moment are bound to be circumspect, upon system, lest all should be endangered by the perfidy or the weakness of one. We may be assured that his friends, not less than his foes, were waiting Paul Riel's arrival on the other side of the Channel—were closely observing his movements. Could the police arrest him without the knowledge of his fellow-conspirators? I think not. Well, I may say that his friends have no knowledge of his arrest. I have been in communication with certain agents in Paris, in whose good faith I can trust implicitly."

In reply to my enquiries, they have nothing to tell me on the subject of Paul Riel. You think the whole body of conspirators—both Paul and those watching for his coming—may have been arrested at one fell swoop and carried off to prison? have all gone, and left no trace behind them? That is not possible. So strong a measure could not be carried into execution without great stir and scandal. For the arrests would be very numerous, the excitement would be serious, and the newspapers would surely print information on the subject. The public could not be kept in the dark as to so grave a matter. Certainly the news of the arrests would travel to Paris, would be known to the chiefs of the conspiracy. No, that has not happened; I am fully convinced on that head."

Mr. Grisdale paused again; his difficulty in expressing himself seemed to increase.

"If we say that Paul is still at liberty, although for purposes of his own he chooses to keep silent and hidden, what then? We must consider the character of the man if we would find a clue to the mystery of his conduct. For my part, I am disposed to put faith in men. I have suffered in such wise, more frequently than I should like to say, but it is in my nature to go on trusting still. Of Paul Riel, I know, in truth, very little. I have a great difficulty in forming an opinion concerning him. He's a foreigner, and that increases the difficulty. I have no prejudice against foreigners; far from it, I like them. But I feel that I am often at sea as to the motives that govern them, their moods and ways, and habits of thought. We are not influenced as they are. We seem of a different constitution, both mental and physical. Well, I'll speak very plainly. I can't think Paul Riel a scoundrel—and you don't think so either, Basil."

"I do not, indeed."

"I'm glad to hear you say so; because, you know, there are many people who would pretend to read at the bottom of this mystery a simple explanation of that sort. But I'll not believe that he has wilfully abandoned your poor sister, so young and beautiful as she is, so devoted

to him—a wife a man might well be proud of—a woman to die for rather than desert. It can't be, Basil, it can't be. He is not capable of such villany, and to Doris, his sweet young wife, of all people in the world. No, no, we won't believe that of him. Nor let us think of him," and here he lowered his voice almost to a whisper, "that he has betrayed his trust—that he has eluded the vigilance of his fellow-conspirators, and made terms with the authorities, who, to suit their own vile purposes, are keeping him close for a while. That can't be true either, can it, now? What do you say, Basil?"

"I say with you, that it cannot be true, Mr. Grisdale. Paul Riel could not stoop to such infamy. I would stake my life upon his integrity."

Mr. Grisdale shook me cordially by the hand as though congratulating me upon my confidence, the while I thought I perceived upon his face certain ominous shadows.

Either he distrusted Paul, or he felt serious apprehensions as to his fate.

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STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER V. A MIDGE'S WING.

"THIS is Hinchford," said the curate of St. Anselm's, as he and his old college acquaintance reached the large iron gates flanked by the great stone lodge, that all the county knew.

"This is Hinchford, is it? And what are we to do now? You know the ways, I suppose? Are you certain they won't take me for a travelling photographer who wants to take the premises?"

After all, the Bohemian atmosphere of Lady Quorne in London did not follow her beyond her lodge gates into the country. At any rate, Walter Gordon felt an increase of dustiness and shabbiness as he stood before the entrance of the park and realised that he was, after all, not a vagrant painter for the time, but the invited guest of a countess; and a certain fibre of cotton in him warned him that he should have arrived at Hinchford as such, however he might have journeyed thither. It was hardly fair to Gaveston to pass the iron gates in his company; for the clergyman, though on foot, looked as if he had travelled from Deepweald in a bandbox, and had but just descended therefrom. And, be she what she will in that great world of London, where alone all men, and all women too, are just as equal as they please to make themselves, a countess is a countess in her own county.

The curate let one hand fall on one of his whiskers, and slide absently to the last hair as he let his eyes rest mildly on

the painter. It was enough for Walter Gordon—he was quick to read the slightest symptoms of the sign of a thought; no man quicker. The cotton-fibre shrank and shrivelled; the native Bohemian woof, descended to him Heaven and his great-grandfather alone knew whence, resumed its prominence, and he felt that the Reverend Reginald Gaveston was a prig, and that he had a prig at his mercy. The temptation was too strong. The curate looked so intensely respectable, so painfully spotless, so elegantly whiskered, that to disarrange him, if only to the point of one whisker tip, was the first duty of artistic and unclerical man. It is to be feared Walter Gordon had not yet learned reverence for what is reverend.

"Gaveston," he said gravely, "do you know Lady Quorne well, very well?"

"She is my first cousin—that is to say, once removed."

"Indeed? That is fortunate. Much more fortunate than I. You see what I am, Gaveston—three-quarters tramp, one-quarter painter. In fact, I'm a special type of the rolling-stone. But rolling-stones have luck now and then. You shall introduce me to Lady Quorne."

"Why, I thought you knew her?"

"Ah—in London; that's one thing. But here! Of course you don't know how a man feels, without a spare shilling in his pocket, when he finds himself on the threshold of the county families. In short, I'm an adventurer, and I feel like one. I shall enter Hinchford under your wing; you can say you knew me at Oxford, you know, and that—well, I had plenty of money to throw away."

The jest was both a good and a bad one. It was good from the point of view of the

ester with the spice of malice in him, who is still schoolboy enough to be unable to see a very clean white choker without a desire to dip a quill pen into an ink-bottle, bend it backward, and let it fly; and also from the no less malicious but more philosophical standpoint of those who like to try little experiments on human nature—more especially on that part of human nature connected with corns. Nor is it altogether a bad thing to carry a little wholesome taste for mischief into years that, as a rule, have only too little of the schoolboy. Walter Gordon felt instinctively that Reginald Gaveston had been born with an objection to introduce, as an old friend, a penniless painter-adventurer to a Countess of Quorne; and the feeling was one that acts upon an amateur Bohemian like the proverbial red rag on the proverbial bull. The true Bohemian, truly without a penny, would have sympathised with the curate rather than otherwise. But this of course the curate could not know. As for the badness of the jest—but that is obvious, and needs no explication.

The curate did look a little thoughtful. No man, however good-natured, likes to pick up by chance an old acquaintance, to whom he may some day be called upon to lend half-a-crown. And that this was the habit of painters and poets he was well assured.

"But—you are invited to Hinchford?"

The question showed so plainly what was passing in the curate's mind, and such a vista of suspicion based on a felt hat and dusty boots, that Walter Gordon's malice was disarmed.

"Gaveston," he said, "confess at once you think me an impostor—a rogue and a vagabond; that I have never been asked to Hinchford; that I only want to be; that I want you to introduce me to your cousin, the countess, as a painter—out at elbows, it is true—but worth picking up, and being patronised into genius. Never mind, old fellow—I won't trouble you. Only tell me the secret of walking in mud and dust, without a speck to show it—a man who knows that, has nothing more to learn."

"It is quite simple," said the curate simply. "I came as far as the cross-road in a fly."

Walter Gordon did look at Gaveston with some surprise. A man who has become saturated with the atmosphere of irony and badinage, when he comes in

collision with a man who knows nothing of it, is the more bewildered of the two. He had not succeeded in mystifying the curate in the least, for the latter had taken all he heard as much at the foot of the letter as if it had come from some plain-speaking citizen of Deepweald, where nobody ever thought of saying one thing in order the more clearly and pointedly to express another. But Walter Gordon spent a whole second, at least, in trying to find what metaphor, or allegory, or twist of humour the curate intended, when he capped Walter's application of clean boots to worldly knowledge by importing the idea of a fly. It was almost more than a second before he realised that the curate had really supposed that he wanted to know.

One second only. But what may not depend on a single second—on a single tick of the watch even, which is less; or a single beat of the pulse, which is less still; or a single wave of thought, which is the least conceivable measure, unless, indeed, it be the wave of a dream? The longer I live, the more prone I am to see how life demands microscopic observation before it can be comprehended in large; how it is not a great whole, divided and subdivided into infinite detail, but a mass of infinitely minute atoms, massed, in one way or another, into a more or less imperfect whole. I wonder that anyone is found bold enough to be a biographer. How can mortal man perceive, far less appreciate, the unfelt pin-prick here, the unperceived speck of dust there, that are of more lasting consequence and result than all the dramatic thunder and lightning that only serves to sweep away the lumber of accumulated pricks and specks, and to clear the air? Meanwhile the curate of St. Anselm's had told Walter Gordon that he had come from Deepweald as far as the cross-road in a fly, and Walter Gordon, being unused to dull sincerity, even in trifles, had paused a moment to find the irony in a simple observation, where the want of it had baffled him. And the moment was enough to postpone his repentance for a clumsy attempt to mystify one who was so over-easily mystified, and to bring them across Mr. Ferguson, the Scotch gardener; and then the curate said:

"Will you excuse me, Gordon? I have something to say to Mr. Ferguson about—about——"

"It will be the cucumbers, nae doot, Mr. Gaveston?"

"Ah—thank you—yes; of course, about the cucumbers," said the curate, leaping with infinite gratitude at any word that might save him from entering the house of his cousin, the countess, as Walter Gordon's godfather. "We shall meet again." And he went off with Mr. Ferguson, proud of the tact that had enabled him to put off, for at least a day, the request for the loan of five shillings, perhaps ten, that he saw ominously looming before him.

Reginald Gaveston duly followed Mr. Ferguson to the cucumber-frames. They were the question of the day, as regarded from my lord's side of the house, though, from the other side, in my lady's interest, they were not held in equal estimation. Lady Quorne was conscious of keeping too many hobbies in her own stable to find fault with those which, by being stabled in another's, were a standing excuse for her own; but the same mutual tolerance for horticulture on the one side, and for æsthetics on the other, did not find its way downstairs. Mr. Ferguson felt a real and professional zeal for the cause, and affected more; and, being a philosopher by nation, and a lecturer by nature, he gave Mr. Gaveston a lecture on the natural history of cucumbers in general that would have lasted, presumably, till the dinner-bell, had it not travelled off into a spoken treatise on his own skill in particular, and thence to the history of Jonah and theology in general—for Mr. Ferguson had been bred for the kirk, and never lost an opportunity of letting all men know that nothing short of the rankest heterodoxy had made him condescend to take double wages as a gardener. To discuss abstruse points of metaphysical divinity with an English clergyman was a chance that did not come about every day. And whether he held forth on cucumbers, or on freedom of will, the silence of Gaveston was so impressive, and suggested such unfathomable learning, that the Scot, though nearly as shrewd as he was vain, felt that for once he had found a foeman worthy of his steel.

He did not bow, but held out his hand at parting; for Lord Quorne's head-gardener was fully the equal of the curate of St. Anselm's.

"I thank ye for a most interesting conversation, Mr. Gaveston. Ye're the most enlightened minister I ever met with. Ye've assented and consented to eighteen separate rank heresies, as they call them,

in a single hour. John Knox would have burned ye where ye stand; but my lord shall give ye his best living, or my name's not Ferguson. And I'll give ye hints for sermons that'll frighten the bishops out o' their wigs, and last ye twenty year to come."

Gaveston was getting a little nervous about his visit to Hinchford. He had been especially anxious to make a good impression, and not to be claimed on the threshold as an old college friend by a penniless Bohemian, or a fellow-heretic by a disputatious Scotch gardener. It was not for this he had laid out that piece of simple cunning which consisted in leaving his hired fly at the cross-road, and walking up to the house, as any gentleman might even if he kept a dozen carriages. To walk is a matter of taste; a hired fly, with a driver who might chatter to a groom, would have been a matter of imprudence, and have proved necessity. For, since the truth must be told, the Reverend Reginald Gaveston had not made the most of the advantages to which he had been born, or even of those to which his fame as a fast bowler had entitled him. He was, it is true, first cousin, once removed, to the present Lady Quorne, and he had known her when he was a boy; and what might not have happened when, he being curate of St. Anselm's, she came to live at Hinchford as the greatest lady all round Deepweald? If he had only known that his own cousin was only going to become Countess of Quorne! But then I cannot tell; Love has a way of laughing at prudence even where the most unlikely people are concerned, and I have never heard that curates are especially exempt from his laughter. Only two years before the present Lady Quorne came to the throne, he had married. That was not much in itself. But a long course of life in lodgings, of Dorcas meetings, and of a dozen and a half standing comparisons to her advantage, had led him on, by those slow steps which the heart knows so well how to make along the paths of association and opportunity, first into love, and then into marriage, with the only daughter of a land-agent in Deepweald—a most respectable man, but the reverse of such a connection as a countess would care to have at her own doors, and a Bohemian countess least of all.

Had Bessy Swann, good and nice-looking girl as she was, without a single h too many or too few, and with hands as fit to

look well in gloves as anybody's in the county, been an actress or a singer, matters might not have been so difficult to manage. There would have been a dramatic courage about such a marriage that would, or might, have gone straight to Lady Quorne's fancy. And if the girl had had no relations and no friends, or had come from anywhere but Deepweald, things might not have been insuperable. For almost any girl will pass, so long as she is an orphan with neither aunts nor uncles, and has no settled home. But for the Swanns of Deepweald to claim cousinship with the Earl of Quorne was an intolerable nuisance.

And so, to simplify matters and put them on their proper footing, it was obviously the right policy to ignore, with the utmost politeness possible, the Reverend Reginald Gaveston. It was not hard, for the present Lady Quorne, unlike her predecessor, was very seldom indeed at Hinchford. When she did come, as now, at a time of year when her guests were fewest, she, with a want of good breeding of which I cannot affect to pretend the greatest and best-hearted of ladies are not on occasions as fully capable as others, invited the husband without the wife, and that without excuse or apology, to dine and sleep at Hinchford.

When Bessy Swann became Mrs. Reginald Gaveston, it must be said, to do her justice, that the exceptionally aristocratic flavour that hung about the curate of St. Anselm's had far less to do with her part in the making of the marriage than might have been expected. His connection with the Marquess of Horchester was, as it were, a painting of the lily. He had so many advantages of his own. He was a clergyman to begin with. He was a remarkably handsome clergyman, from the Deepweald standpoint. He was clever, learned, and so forth by right of profession. He read beautifully. He had some present means and fair expectations—so far as they would bear the deduction of certain old Oxford debts of which nobody knew anything but certain Oxford tradesmen. And last, but not least, to win the curate of St. Anselm's was notoriously and openly the blue ribbon of Deepweald. There is no need to speak of such trifling matters as docility and amiability, because they are not, at least popularly, supposed to be particularly meritorious in the eyes of women; but still meekness in a curate is more endurable than in a dragon.

But, not long after the engagement and shortly before the marriage—for Mr. Swann made the period of waiting short enough to be quite endurable—Miss Swann began to hear herself congratulated upon marrying into the "aristocracy," as people with titles are called in Deepweald. As Miss Hayward, who knew her peerage well, was the first to set these congratulations going, a taint of jealousy might have been suspected in less innocent circles than those of a cathedral city; but Miss Swann, and Mrs. Swann still more, took them with absolute good faith, and even began to wonder—first in hidden corners of their hearts, then by mutual understandings, and at last with scarcely shame-faced openness—whether the Marquess or the Marchioness would really take proper notice of Reginald Gaveston's bride. After all, land-agency is a profession and not a trade; and a clergyman's wife is a clergyman's wife, as much as a captain is a captain. But no present, not so much as a brooch even, arrived from the great relations, and though wedding-cards were sent, none were returned. It was a mortification, especially as Miss Hayward never failed to ask, whenever she made a morning call at the curate's little house behind the college-green, whether her dear Bessy had heard from the Marchioness lately, and what she was wearing now. But it became even worse when Reginald's own cousin became Countess of Quorne in her mature years, and came to live, or might if she pleased have come to live, at Hinchford, only fifteen miles away.

Then was poor Bessy, without feeling the least guilty of evasion or equivocation, driven to shift after shift to escape from the open confession that she had no superiority over Deepweald, in ever having seen the new Countess of Quorne; that she knew more about Eve's dress than hers; that she did not know even whether she was handsome or plain, save from the photograph that found its way into a shop-window in College-court, and which every passer-by might see. Even Reginald could not tell her; he had not seen his cousin since he was a little boy. Nor could he explain to his wife why he was left so utterly without notice, though he knew very well. He could not say: "I should have had the run of Hinchford, and welcome, if I had married almost anybody but you." And she could not say: "Why do your great relations never notice you?" They had not been married long

enough yet to have lost all sense of courtesy in their confidences.

Nevertheless, the sore rankled, as such sores will, far more than real wounds. And when, at last, a letter came directed, in an affectedly dashing hand, to "The Reverend Reginald Gaveston, Deepweald," with a real coronet and the letter Q to represent the seal, the really innocent heart of Bessy Gaveston gave a little leap; and it came to her—like what some people call a presentiment, and others, an unreasonable wish—that her first-born, her new and as yet provisionally-named Bessy, was to have a real countess for a god-mother after all. That would redeem everything. It was an invitation to Hinchford. But it was for Reginald alone, and not for her.

"I shall not go," said Reginald, mildly but decisively.

"Not go, dear—not to Hinchford?" she had felt the neglect, but was unable to distinguish between the invitation of a countess and a royal command.

"No, certainly not. They don't even mention your name."

"Perhaps they don't know you're married, dear?"

"Oh yes! They know."

Bessy began to suspect what he meant. But she was still torn by conflicting desires. Pride is a feminine as well as a masculine thing; but even in men there are few things to which pride will not yield most humbly—especially the curious quality that is called proper pride, and has been dubbed a virtue, Heaven knows why. There was nothing in being asked to Hinchford to counterbalance the curate's pride, but there was a great deal to compensate for the wound suffered by her own.

"Do you know—dear—if you don't mind—I think I should like you to go to Hinchford?"

"It is impossible, Bessy. They have treated me—"

"I know, dear. But—perhaps you don't know how it feels when Miss Hayward asks you how the countess dresses, and you have to say you don't know."

No doubt Mr. Gaveston was a little hen-pecked. So are all men who are worth anything. And at last, and not slowly, he was brought to acknowledge that for the little Bessy's sake, and perhaps for others yet to come, he ought not to run the risk of offending the Countess of Quorne; not to speak of the virtue of

forgiving injuries that, after all, might be unintentional. All these things Mrs. Gaveston impressed upon him; but "Mind and don't forget to remember to notice how she's dressed" were her very last words.

He went; and before night, all the ladies of Deepweald knew that Gaveston had at last gone to Hinchford; but that Mrs. Gaveston had not, on account of some croup-like symptoms on the part of little Bessy. Bessy the elder was not at all untruthful; the child had croup-like symptoms, and she had not gone.

Reginald Gaveston had not told Walter Gordon that it was his first visit to his cousin since her countess-ship. But it is clear why he should choose not to make it as social godfather to Walter Gordon, and should prefer the by-way of the cucumber-frames.

He reached the house without coming in collision again with his old college friend, and was told that Lady Quorne would see him in the white drawing-room. He had been in the house in former days and knew his way; but he wondered more and more, as he found it, if it could be true that a man like Walter Gordon by any sort of odd chance had found it also. He must have been an impostor—felt hats and knapsacks and their accompaniments had never found their way into Hinchford since the Mordants had been its Viscounts and Earls of Quorne. And then he thought how long it had been since he had seen his cousin Alicia, and if she had changed as much as he knew he must be since he was fifteen and she twenty-five, and he had spent a whole summer holiday at the seat of the marquess, and had thought her a vision of beauty. And then he entered the white drawing-room.

It was a large and noble room on the first floor, made for light and air, with large French windows, and hung with pictures, mostly landscapes in bright colours, with plenty of blue and green. But there was no white about it in particular, except in the person of a lady, full of figure, sombre in complexion and dress, but decorated with a most glorious parure of pearls. She reclined half lazily on a low sofa, fanning herself slowly and luxuriously. Unmindful of his promise to Bessy at home, he looked at his cousin first and at her dress afterwards; she was not the vision of beauty he remembered, as fifteen remembers five-and-twenty, but she was well preserved, and had handsome

eyes. And then came a difficulty. Should he greet her as Cousin Alicia? Would she call him Cousin Reginald? Or were they to be Mr. Gaveston and Lady Quorne?

Cousin Alicia herself solved the difficulty by rising graciously as far as a sitting posture, but no farther, closing her fan for an instant with as much expression of nothing in particular as if she had been a born Spaniard, and saying, as she fell back again in a less unconscious and therefore less graceful disposition of herself:

"Good evening, monsieur."

Bessy would have thought anything natural in high society; Gaveston, though he knew by rumours that Cousin Alicia was as full of foreign affectation as an egg of meat, thought her way of solving the difficulty ingenious, but queer.

THE MAN IN THE MOON AND HIS COMPANIONS.

AMONGST the superstitions yet lingering in the minds of mankind, none, perhaps, is more universal than that of the man in the moon. In England he is chiefly immortalised by the old nursery rhyme, but no further details are given of his proceedings. German legends are, however, more communicative, and sundry traditions relate his history, varying in different parts of the country.

A Swabian mother at Derendingen tells her child that a man was once working in his vineyard on Sunday, and after having pruned all his vines, he made a bundle of the shoots he had just cut off, laid it in his basket and went home. According to one version the vines were stolen from a neighbour's vineyard. When taxed either with Sabbath-breaking, or with the theft, the culprit stoutly protested his innocence, and finally exclaimed, "If I have committed such a crime, may I go to the moon!" After his death, this fate duly befell him, and there he remains to this day, condemned to eat molten lead as a punishment. The Black Forest peasantry say that the dark spots visible in the moon are caused by a man being spell-bound there. He stole a bundle of wood on Sunday, because he thought on that day he should be unmolested by the foresters. But he had not gone far with it when he met a stranger, who was none other than the Almighty Himself. After reproving the thief for not keeping

the Sabbath-day holy, God said he must be punished; but he might choose whether he would be banished to the sun or the moon. The man chose the latter, declaring he would rather freeze in the moon than burn in the sun, and thus the "Besenmännle" or "Broom-man" came into the moon with his faggot on his back. Some say that the Almighty set light to the faggot and it burns perpetually, in order that the bearer may not be frozen to death. At Waltenburg in the Grisons, the tale is somewhat different. A poor woman besought a "Senner" to give her a little milk, which he roughly refused to do. Thereupon she wished he might go to the coldest place in existence, which is the moon, and he is there visible with his milk-pail.

The man in the moon frequently figures in North German legends. Kuhn relates a tradition in the Havel country. One Christmas-eve a peasant felt a great desire to eat cabbage, and having none himself, he slipped into his neighbour's garden to cut some. Just as he had filled his basket, the Christ Child rode past on his white horse and said, "Because thou hast stolen on the holy night, thou shalt immediately sit in the moon with thy basket of cabbage." No sooner said than done, and the criminal is still undergoing his penalty. At Paderborn in Westphalia, the crime committed was not theft, but hindering people from attending church on Easter-day by placing a thorn-bush in the field-gate through which they had to pass.

In the neighbourhood of Wittingen, the man is said to be banished to the moon, because he tied up his brooms on Maundy Thursday; and at Deilinghofen, of having mown his meadows on Sunday.

Different versions are related in Limburg, where the man in the moon is believed to have stolen wood on Easter morning; while at Hemer in Westphalia, people say he was engaged in fencing his field on Good Friday, and had just poised a bunch of thorns on his fork, when he was at once transported to the moon. Some of the Hemer peasants declare that the moon is not only inhabited by a man with his thorn-bush and pitchfork, but likewise by a woman churning. They are husband and wife, and both broke the Sabbath, the man by fencing his field, and the woman by churning her butter, during the hours of divine service.

An ancient Northern fable states that Mâni (the Moon) kidnapped two children called Bil and Hinki from the earth, whilst they were employed in drawing water from the well Byrgir, bearing on their shoulders the pail Sægr on the yoke Simul. These children follow Mâni, and are plainly visible from the earth.

This myth of the child-stealing Moon Man, which existed throughout the North and also in Germany, evidently received a Christian colouring in later times. The idea of the theft was retained, but the chief stress is laid on the observance of the Christian festival. The culprit does not suffer for stealing the wood, but mainly for committing the sin on the Lord's-day. This interpretation may have originated in the account in the Book of Numbers, of Moses commanding the Israelite to be stoned who had gathered wood on the Sabbath-day. Grimm says he cannot trace the exact period when the Northern fable first appeared in Germany, but he has no doubt of its great antiquity.

All nations seem to have had a curious desire to account for the spots in the moon.

According to the Hindoos, Chandras, the God of the Moon, bears a hare in his arms. The Mongolians also believe that the spots represent a hare. One of their deities transformed himself into a hare to feed a starving wayfarer; and in honour of this act of virtue the figure of a hare was thenceforth visible in the moon. The natives of Ceylon have a somewhat similar legend. When Buddha sojourned as a hermit on earth, he one day lost his way in a forest, and after long wanderings he met a hare, who thus addressed him, "I can help thee. Do thou take the right-hand path, and I will guide thee out of this wilderness."

"I thank thee," returned Buddha, "but I am poor and starving, and am unable to requite thy kindness."

"If thou art hungry," replied the hare, "light a fire, kill and eat me."

Buddha lighted a fire as desired, and the hare immediately leaped in; but Buddha now displayed his supernatural powers, and, tearing the hare from the flames, he placed it in the moon, where it still abides. This story is related by a French traveller in Ceylon, and he adds that his telescope was often borrowed by the natives, in order that they might inspect the hare in the moon.

Chaucer describes the moon as Lady Cynthia:

Her gite was gray and full of spottis blake,
And on her brest a chorle paintid ful even
Bearing a bush of thornis on his bake
Which for his theft might climb no ner the heven.

Shakespeare also alludes to the man in the moon in *The Tempest* and *The Midsummer Night's Dream*.

According to one tradition, the figure is that of Isaac, bearing the faggot on his shoulders for his own sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Another calls the man, "Cain with a bundle of briars." Dante mentions this both in his *Paradiso* and *Inferno*. There is a pretty mediæval legend which describes the moon as St. Mary Magdalene, and the spots on it as her repentant tears.

The following Westphalian legends are evidently not of Christian origin. A youth, visiting his sweetheart at night, wished to enter her room by the window, while the moon was shining brightly. He, therefore, took a bramble with which he attempted to darken it; but he remained hanging to the thorn-bush.

A tipsy man, coming out of the public-house, threatened the moon with a bramble he held in his hand. This audacious conduct enraged the moon, who drew the man up, and there he is to this day.

Müllenhoff says that the people of Rantum, in the Schleswig island of Sylt, declare that the man in the moon is a giant, who bends down at full tide to scoop up the water and pour it on the earth. At low tide he stands upright, resting from his labours, so that the water may subside.

We now come to the superstitions attached to the power of the moon, and prominent amongst them is the idea that no work may be undertaken in moonshine. The Swabian people consider it a great sin to spin, or knit by moonlight, as though one could not do enough by day. That is the reason why the moon does not give sufficient light for any work: Whoever ventures to spin, for example, weaves a rope for the neck of some relation. There are several stories illustrating the danger of transgressing this rule.

A poor woman at Brackenheim, in Swabia, gained her livelihood by spinning, and her diligence was so great that she spent whole nights at her distaff; in order to save the expense of oil, she never lighted her lamp when there was a full moon. As she thus sat spinning in the

moonshine, and the church-clock was tolling the hour of midnight, the door opened and a strange man entered. He had his arms full of distaffs and said: "If thou dost not spin all these full this night, it will be all over with thee, and I shall come and fetch thee." With these words he vanished, leaving the woman in a terrible fright. Luckily she bethought herself of merely spinning the distaffs once over, and in this way she completed her task before daybreak. The stranger, who was the devil himself, reappeared at the appointed time and silently took the spindles away with him. But never again did the woman spin by moonlight.

A similar tale is told at Tübingen, only there the evil one manifested his displeasure at being balked of his prey by leaving such an odour of brimstone behind him, that no one could live in the room for the next six months. A maiden of Pfullingen was knitting at midnight by moonshine, when an apparition appeared at the window, offering her knitting-needles, on which she immediately threw down her work and fled from the room.

Schönwerth says that the peasants of the Upper Palatinate never leave their carts or agricultural implements out of doors when the moon is shining, as its beams would break them. For the same reason, linen must not be left hanging in the moonshine, and superstitious folks always warn their friends against sleeping in the moonlight, and bathing, or drinking from any fountain or well, on which the rays of the moon fall. It is also unsafe to dance by moonlight, because the surface of the earth is then as thin as cobweb, and the spirits underground are lured upwards by the music. The moon is likewise said to blacken the complexion, to promote the decay of fish and meat, and even to blunt the edge of razors.

The precepts concerning the phases of the moon are very numerous. Throughout Germany, except in Tyrol, where the contrary rule prevails, hair must be cut as the moon increases. Eggs laid in the first quarter of the moon are good to eat and for setting, but those laid in the last quarter will never produce chickens. Cattle, poultry, and shellfish are all fatter when the moon is full. Rye must be sown as the moon waxes, but peas, barley, and wheat when it wanes.

Weddings ought always to be solemnised during the new moon, otherwise the mar-

riage will be unfortunate; and every peasant in East Prussia, Pomerania, and Hesse avoids if possible being married during the last quarter of the moon. But washing, chopping firewood, and killing pigs may be done at that period. Indeed, the Servian women positively refuse to wash any clothes in the first quarter of the moon, as they declare the whole of the linen would be creased and be soon torn.

The moon plays a great part in popular remedies, sympathetic cures, &c., despite, or perhaps because, its light is believed to be poisonous.

The Tyrolese cure freckles by washing them at night with water in which the moon shines. In the Harz Mountains and Silesia, the remedy for goitres is to turn one's face to the increasing moon three evenings running, then take a stone, silently touch the swelling with it, and throw it over the left shoulder. Meier quotes a Swabian charm for toothache. When the crescent moon reappears for the first time, the sufferer must gaze at it steadfastly and repeat thrice: "I see the moon with two points; my teeth shall neither shoot nor ache, until I see the moon with three points."

Crabs caught during full moon, and then burnt alive and ground to powder, cure hydrophobia. Of course the moon necessarily assists at all deeds of sorcery, such as casting magic bullets, the manufacture of a divining-rod, and the like.

The following recipe for avenging oneself on one's enemies is given by Kuhn in Westphalia: "When the new moon falls on a Tuesday, go out before daybreak to a stake selected beforehand, turn to the east and say, 'Stick, I grasp thee in the name of the Trinity.' Take thy knife and say, 'Stick, I cut thee in the name of the Trinity, that thou mayest obey me and chastise anyone whose name I mention.' Then peel the stick in two places, to enable thee to carve these words: *Abia, obia, sabia*. Lay a smock-frock on thy threshold and strike it hard with the stick, at the same time naming the person who is to be beaten. Though he be many miles away, he will suffer as much as if he were on the spot."

The ancient Greeks and Romans considered the moon to be a protection against the evil eye, and they hung small moons made of metal round their necks as amulets. Even the wives and horses of the Romans wore them. The custom has not yet disappeared in Italy and the East.

Some years ago Neapolitan ladies used to wear small silver half-moons on their arms, as a preservative against epilepsy, which popular belief has always connected with the evil eye. The talismanic crescent has ever been the badge of Islam, and it still glitters on the minarets.

Before quitting our subject we must add a few traditions respecting the other denizens of the sky, for although the man in the moon is the chief hero of celestial legendary lore, his companions in the firmament are by no means ignored.

Much less superstition is attached to the sun than the moon. Plants possessing magical properties must be gathered, if not by moonlight, yet at any rate before sunrise, for the first appearance of his rays immediately dispels all enchantment, and drives back the spirits to their subterranean abodes. Twice a year the sun changes its course—descending in summer, ascending in winter. In pagan times both the summer and winter solstice were seasons of great festivity.

Swabian people believe that on Easter Day, or as some say on Ascension Day, the rising sun leaps thrice for joy. At Rotenburg, on the Neckar, the sun is supposed to perform these antics on Christmas Eve, the period of the winter solstice. On Good Friday the sun mourns over the crucifixion, and does not shine until three o'clock in the afternoon. In some parts of Upper Swabia, public prayers are still offered up after an eclipse. The appearance of three suns denotes war; they are only visible at sunrise and differ in size. The largest gains the day, practically and metaphorically. At Herbrechtingen these suns have frequently been seen, and such was the case just before Napoleon's Russian campaign. The largest sun was in the northern direction, and that is why the Russians won.

The sun is obliged to shine for a short time, at least, every Sunday, in order that the Blessed Virgin may dry her veil. Three Saturdays in the year, on which she mourns, the sun does not shine at all.

The stars also played no small part in heathen mythology. According to popular belief they are favourable or unfavourable to mankind, depending on the constellation under which each human being is born. There was a pious custom of saluting the stars before retiring to rest, or else repeating a prayer on the appearance of the evening star. Whoever points at a star puts out the eyes of an angel. The "Edda"

describes the stars as fiery sparks, which floated about in the air until their places were appointed for them by the gods.

Falling stars are weighty omens, and whoever beholds one ought to repeat a prayer. In Tyrol and elsewhere, it is believed that any wish, expressed whilst a star falls, will be fulfilled; a treasure lies where it falls. The Lithuanian myth connects falling stars with the Fates. Werpeja, the spinner, begins to weave the thread of each newly-born human being in the sky, and each thread terminates in a star; when death approaches a man, his thread breaks and the star fades and falls.

A comet is prophetic and generally presages evil. The Tyrolese call it "God's Rod," and say that its import may be learned from its colour. Red signifies war and misery, but, if the light be clear and bright, it portends peace and happiness.

The Milky Way usually goes in Swabia by the name of "Jacob's Ladder," or "Heaven's Ladder." The angels still descend on the earth by it, as Jacob saw in his dream, but they are not visible to everyone.

The Great Bear probably owes his name of "Wain" to Paganism. It is said that at midnight the chariot turns with a mighty rumbling. The Swabian peasantry believe that it drives to Jerusalem every night; whilst the Swiss have a superstition that if it be low in the sky bread will be cheap, if the contrary it will be dear. Grimm is of opinion that the chariot belonged to Wuotan, as being the chief of the gods, although an old Swedish chronicle attributes the Swedish name "Karl Wagen," our English "Charles's Wain," to Thor; but Grimm adds that many Wuotan legends were applied to the Frankish Emperor Charles the Great. The cities of Antwerp and Groningen have the constellation of Ursa Major or Minor on their municipal seals. The small star, scarcely visible above the middle one in the pole of the chariot, has its own legend, and is called "Hans Dümken" in North Germany. It is said that he once drove our Lord, who in return promised he should go to heaven; but the man replied he would rather drive throughout eternity, and his wish was granted. Most likely this is founded on some heathen tale of Wuotan's charioteer.

Orion, as the Greeks called the belt of glittering stars, has several German names. In some parts the three stars are called the "Three Mowers," and the

Rhineland name is "The Rake." The Swabians say it is Moses's staff with which he divided the Red Sea, and other names are "Jacob's Staff" and "St. Peter's Staff."

In Germany, the Pleiades are almost universally known as "The Hen," because the foremost star is supposed to resemble a hen leading her brood of chickens. There is a curious legend of the origin of these stars. Our Lord once passed a baker's shop, and perceiving a strong odour of new bread, He sent in one of His disciples to ask for a loaf. The baker refused, but his wife, who was standing a little way off with her six daughters, was more compassionate and secretly bestowed the loaf, for which good deed she and her daughters were transferred to the firmament as seven stars. The baker was changed into a cuckoo, and the Pleiades are always visible as long as the cuckoo calls in the spring.

The appearance of the rainbow in the sky gave rise to many mythological conceptions. The "Edda" describes it as the heavenly bridge Bifröst, traversed by the gods. It is the best of all bridges, and is strongly constructed of three colours; nevertheless when the end of the world comes, it will break down while the sons of Muspell are driving over it. Its end reaches to Himinbiörg, the abode of Heimdall, and Heimdallr guards it against the giants, lest they should penetrate into heaven.

According to popular belief, the extremities of a rainbow always touch streams, whence it draws water, by means of two large golden dishes. That is why it rains for three days after the appearance of a rainbow, because the water must fall again on the earth. Whoever arrives at the right moment at the spot where the rainbow is drinking, can take possession of the golden dish, which reflects all the colours of the rainbow; but if nobody is there the dishes are again drawn up into the clouds. Some say that the rainbow always lets a dish fall. This once happened at Reutlingen, in Swabia. It broke in several pieces, but the finder received a hundred gulden for it. At Tübingen, people used to run to the end of the rainbow, which appeared to be resting over the Neckar or the Steinlach, to secure the golden dish. Usually it is considered wrong to sell the dish, which ought to be kept as an heirloom in the family, for it brings good luck. A shepherd in the Swabian Alp once found such a dish, and

he never afterwards lost a sheep. An unfortunate native of Heubach, who sold the treasure at a high price, was struck dumb on the spot. Small round gold coins, marked with a cross or star, are frequently found in Swabia, and the peasants declare that these were manufactured from the rainbow dishes by the Romans when they invaded Germany. In the Black Forest, the rainbow uses a golden goblet, which is afterwards dropped. A shoe thrown into a rainbow comes back filled with gold. The Servians have a theory that passing beneath a rainbow changes the sex—men become women and vice versa.

When a double rainbow is seen, Swabian peasants say that the devil would like to imitate the rainbow, but he cannot succeed. The Estonians call the rainbow "The Thunder-god's Sickle."

A theory existed in the Middle Ages that the rainbow would cease to appear a certain number of years before the Last Judgment, and Hugo von Trimberg, in an old German poem, mentions forty years as the prescribed time; but this supposition is not alluded to in any ecclesiastical works.

The Lithuanians have a quaint legend respecting the rainbow. When their chief god Pramzimas was looking out of the window and beheld the whole earth full of wars and wickedness, he despatched two giants, named Wandu and Wejas (Water and Wind), to the sinful world, who destroyed everything for twenty days and twenty nights. While engaged in eating heavenly nuts, Pramzimas gazed on the scene of desolation below, and he threw down a nutshell, which fell on the summit of the highest mountain, where a few men and women and some animals had fled for refuge. All got into the nutshell, which floated on the waves of the now universal flood. The god then looked on the earth for the third time. He allayed the tempest and bade the waters subside. The human beings who had been saved all dispersed, excepting a few couples who remained in that part, and became the ancestors of the Lithuanians in the following manner. As old age crept upon them they sorrowed greatly at their probable extinction, so in order to comfort them Pramzimas sent the rainbow, who advised them to leap over the bones of the earth. Nine times did they perform this feat, and thence sprang nine couples, males and females, from whom the nine Lithuanian tribes are descended.

SOUTHERNWOOD.

AH me! how seldom now are seen
 These slender spikes of fragrant green,
 In garden beds and bowers;
 Fair, weaving hands no longer choose
 A single homely spray to use
 With favoured modern flowers.
 Its bushy greenness used to lend
 Our childish nosegays grace, and blend
 With older-fashioned blooms;
 We mixed it with the dark heartsease,
 With cabbage-roses, pinks, sweet-peas,
 All rich with quaint perfumes.
 We used it in the posies sweet,
 Fresh-plucked on May-day morns to greet
 Our modest village queen;
 It mingled with the flowers that lay
 Upon the hawthorn-shaded way,
 Towards the daisied green.
 The bride's shy foot trod lightly o'er
 Its tufts, as through the holy door
 She passed to matronhood;
 And on the silent churchyard bed,
 Where sleep our best-beloved dead,
 We planted southernwood.
 But now it springs unseen, unknown,
 Till hands grown feeble, like mine own,
 All trembling pull a spray;
 As I pull this with tearful eyes,
 And thronging memories that arise
 Of life's lost dawning day.
 I have been happy, and God knows
 Not one of all my later woes
 Can blot the blissful past!
 I have been happy, and I say,
 Of all my pleasures passed away,
 I knew they could not last.
 I had my share of sun and shower,
 I had my little day of power,
 I queened it with the best;
 Now far from worldly blame and praise,
 My feet are set in quiet ways
 Of calm content and rest.
 I pass the red rose on its spray,
 And in my hand I hold to-day
 A twig of southernwood;
 It tells me I am not bereft,
 It whispers that I yet have left
 The power of doing good.
 It glads the poor man's garden yet,
 And poor men's eyes are often wet
 With tears that I might stay;
 I choose a humble, helping part;
 I take thy teaching to my heart,
 My green, old-fashioned spray!

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

DWELLERS IN TENTS.

MR. CHARLES DARWIN, who, whatever the precise value of the theory of evolution may be, is the most painstaking and candid of philosophers, has dwelt, especially in his later works, with much weight upon the vigour and permanence of inherited peculiarities, and has also made manifest—although the facts pointed out are adverse to his theory—the tendency of cultivated varieties of plants and animals to revert to the original wild types from

which they are descended. No lover of historical portraits is ignorant of the Ashley nose; of the striking resemblance of the Berkeleys to their ancestors, dead and gone five hundred years ago, whose features are preserved in stone and in brass in the chapel at Berkeley Castle; of the peculiar Cavendish under jaw, less in degree but similar in kind to that inherited by the Hapsburgs from their Tyrolese ancestress, Margaret Pocket-mouth. Every pigeon-fancier knows that birds of the best strains will at times “throw back,” and produce a brood showing distinctly the bars on the wing which mark descent from the blue rock. There is no amateur of horse-racing but can tell all about the Whalebone white hairs which descended through Kingston to Caractacus, and through Windhound to Thormanby. I am not sure that I am not guilty of a piece of gross irreverence in comparing ordinary human beings with Derby winners, but must candidly confess that civilised mankind occasionally exhibit a strange tendency to revert to peculiarities of the primeval savage. When I see a group of Italian women and girls carrying great baskets full of farm produce on their backs, while a male creature saunters by their side, carrying nothing heavier than a rake, I cannot help thinking of my friends Sitting Bull and Spotted Tail, who, during the frequent migrations of their tribes, would scorn to set a hand to any such servile work as building a wigwam or carrying a bundle of buffalo-robos. My remembrance of those eminent braves, and their treatment of their womankind, is also kept fresh and green by my witnessing the anxiety of the Lancashire Lad to marry a “fower-loomer,” and his tendency to let her work her four looms while he indulges in the noble sports of rabbit-coursing and dog-fighting; thus keeping her up to her four-loom power without any greater encouragement than an occasional thrashing on Saturday nights. Likewise it is gratifying to a theorist of my “stripe,” when I read an account of a scion of a noble family—a sometime Eton boy, a scholar, and soldier—seizing his young wife by her long fair hair, dragging her into the kitchen, and then and there cutting off her blonde curls with a meat-chopper!

Everywhere, in fact, I see traces of occasional reversion to primeval types; and of these none is more amusing than the recent craze for “camping-out,” as

it is called—obviously the proof of a latent craving in man to run “wild in woods,” if he only get the chance. I think the mania first broke out in the United States, where it owed its early development to the camp-meetings held by the multitudinous sects into which American Christianity is subdivided. Enthusiastic persons who tried camping-out discovered, or imagined, that they came home, after a few days’ or weeks’ life under canvas, refreshed and invigorated both in body and in mind. The medical faculty pounced upon this new experience of life at once, and recommended “camping-out” as a cure for all imaginable ills, consumption included. It was discovered that a “return to a more natural mode of life” was all that was required to patch up stomach and brain, enfeebled by a long course of hot bread and cocktails. The climate of the States—hot and tolerably settled during the summer months—favoured the experiment, and persons of other than a serious turn of mind tried camping-out, as a restorative from the dissipation of New York City. Three young gentlemen, friends of the present writer, went to the Adirondacks, mainly to “camp out,” they said, but with minor views as to shooting, fishing, and other pastimes. In addition to a tent and hammocks they took with them a choice assortment of firearms and fishing-tackle, a formidable wardrobe of shooting and fishing attire, a negro servant called Pearl, a cartload of champagne, several gallons of Bourbon whisky, and several hundred packs of cards. They enjoyed themselves very much indeed, barring the stifling heat and the legions of mosquitoes; they shot a few deer and caught a few trout, they drank all the liquid “provant,” used up all the packs of cards, and the poorest of the three won twenty thousand dollars. So everybody was happy and strong and healthy, and the way these young gentlemen ate, aye, and drank, on their return to New York City was a sight to see.

As the average Englishman has taken to imitate American sayings and doings—very clumsily and foolishly, by-the-way—he has been prompt to follow our cousins in their return to savage life, fulfilling also his natural and inherited bent thereby. There is much camping-out in the Thames valley during our short summer, and this new fashion has developed a new kind of being—the Aquatic Bedouin. He is another creature from the steam-launcher,

who as a rule gets over so much ground, or rather water, in a day, that he has little need for camps. Nor does the Aquatic Bedouin resemble in the least the old-fashioned oarsman, who was wont to row the full length of the course from the Folly-bridge at Oxford to Westminster-bridge, or eke to Whitehall-stairs—who attired himself in white ducks, wellington boots, and a white beaver hat; who wore embroidered braces, slipped over his shoulders while actually at work, and who would have scorned the notion of living “like a set of infernal gipsies, sir.” His successor, who, instead of rowing the course just indicated in a “six-oared wherry” against time, made Putney rejoice and Henley stare at his pace over two or three miles in an outrigger, would never have dreamt of “camping-out” while the Thames abounded with pleasant inns, not yet overcrowded. If he undertook to “paddle down” the river he took good care to secure quarters at The Lamb at Wallingford, at The Miller of Mansfield at Goring, or The Swan at Streatley, and so on, and enjoyed himself heartily. But the dweller in tents is a man of another kind, who enjoys himself in his own way. As a rule, the Aquatic Bedouin provides himself with a large roomy boat at some point of the river accessible by railway, and, starting thence, halts by the riverside at his favourite haunts. His boat generally carries a considerable freight. In addition to the tent, on the construction of which the comfort of the expedition depends, there must be sheets of waterproof to guarantee against damp, or, still better, hammocks to sling clear of earth altogether; there must be camp-kettles and patent cooking-stoves. As brushwood is not adapted to the capacity of patent stoves, it is well to carry a small stock of fuel, and those who yearn after the fleshpots of Egypt do well to load their boxes and hampers with a goodly store of “tinned things”—to wit, curried chicken, pickled salmon, Brunswick sausage, sardines, and so forth—which, with a ham and such supplies as can be bought in the villages near the river, ought to make the commissariat reasonably efficient. It is not prudent to count too much on country markets during the two, or at most, three months suited for camping-out. Bread can be had as a rule, but butchers’ meat is apt to be scarce. It is not amusing—at least, to ordinary persons—to go without dinner; and this is an event

very likely to occur to those who rely on their skill in foraging. Meat is to be got of course at Reading, at Maidenhead, at Abingdon, Twyford, and so forth; but the smaller places are, at times, both steakless and chopless. These facts are pretty well known to practised campers-out, who invariably provide themselves with a sheet-anchor in the shape of a fitch of bacon, plenty of tea and coffee, biscuits and tobacco. The Aquatic Bedouin has a keen but peculiar sense of enjoyment, and beyond a certain loudness and tendency to horse-play is not a very evilly-disposed person. Possibly I am fastidious, but I cannot quite appreciate the advantage of camping-out to the fair sex. I daresay it is healthy when it does not rain, but it does not occur to me that "roughing it" ever improved womankind to any appreciable extent. Moreover, the Bedouins have a knack of collecting in certain spots, and their gathering provokes loud and rough jesting, of the kind designated in London, "chaff," and by no means fitted for female ears. There is at times too much of this in the meadows by Cookham and Goring, and in the woods by Marlow, hard by the bridge under which the historic puppy-pie is said to have been eaten. But despite his few shortcomings, the Bedouin unquestionably adds a picturesque element to the scenery—that is, just as night is coming on. Then his camp-fires glow through the wood with excellent effect, and his tents, glittering here and there in the moonlight like wandering ghosts, suggest reminiscences of that Lady Hoby who is still supposed to haunt a bedroom in Bisham. "Thei seyn" that a "figure so tall," dressed in the coif, weeds, and wimple of a knight's widow of the Tudor period, appears at dead of night, with a self-supported basin moving before her, in which she is perpetually trying to wash her hands. This apparition, which appears always, as photographers would say, in the negative—that is, the black part white and the white part black—may perhaps have suggested to Shakespeare the night-walk of Lady Macbeth. The crime of Lady Hoby was not so great as that of Lady Macbeth, for she was only guilty of killing a naughty boy. Her son, on evidence apparently indisputable—for his copy-books have been discovered—never wrote a line without making a blot. His mother, a literary woman and joint preceptress of Queen Elizabeth, chastised young William Hoby again and again, but

in vain, till one day she beat him that he died. Poor Lady Hoby—boys are very trying!

Others beside the Aquatic Bedouin have their favourite haunts on the Thames. I confess to a lingering liking for stagnant, weed-choked, drowsy Abingdon, whither the Ock descends from the vale of White Horse. It is pleasant to "moon" in this old town, which grew up around the mighty abbey and survived the ecclesiastical institution of which the Abingdon Chronicle is the sole important relic. According to this same chronicle the Abbots of Abingdon were great folk in their day, and quarrelsome and politic withal, for the last of the race surrendered his abbey with such good grace that he secured the manor of Cumnor for himself. But now the bare thought of Abingdon on a hot afternoon is enough to send one to sleep. Frivolous persons are at liberty to enjoy their picnics at Nuneham over the way, and welcome; but to me dear old sunny, sluggish Abingdon is worth all the parks and trim gardens in the world.

There may be recalcitrants with regard to Abingdon, but there are none against Goring and Streatley, the charming twin villages of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, connected by the double bridge with the island in mid-stream. From the railway station at Goring it is delightful to stroll through the most charming of villages overgrown with flowers. As I draw near to The Miller of Mansfield, I pass by a beershop with a curious sign, purporting to represent "A Briton," the said typical islander being portrayed with a man's head, but a beer-barrel body, encircled with an ear of barley. The Miller of Mansfield itself—well known to the brethren of the brush—is almost overgrown with white convolvulus, roses pink and roses yellow, bushy clematis, shining ivy, and grape-laden vine. There is a man sitting in the window and making a sketch, and a young lady is skir-mishing with water-colours in the next house. There is a great heavy-towered church at Goring, and I love to pause on the bridge to look upon it, and also upon that particularly fishful bit of water, labelled Private, which runs past the mill between banks of forget-me-nots. It is a stiff pull up the hill through Streatley to the downs, but over them the outlook is glorious, over the winding, shining river on the one side, and the Berkshire downs on the other. Borne on the west wind are

the pungent odours of yew and juniper, and, to the wanderer endowed with memory and fancy, a faint odour, as it were, of the distant stable. It is a pastoral country hereabouts, a part of tranquil, agricultural, Saxon Wessex, peopled with kindly folk, courteous and genial, honest and industrious, but shrewd withal, and possessed by a strange mania for poaching—regarded from Reading to Yeovil rather as a sport than a crime. To call a man a poacher anywhere on this line of country, is to convey no idea of moral reprobation. The Wessex man “owns up” in a popular song, that it is his “delight, of a shiny night, at the season of the year,” to make short work of the squire’s hares and pheasants. I take this expression of his views as a manifestation of his shrewdness, for unless the few poachers I have had the pleasure of for gathering with deceived me, a dark night is more favourable to them than a “shiny” one. An additional element of shrewdness is communicated to the natives of the Berkshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire downs, all lying, as the O’Mulligan would say, “over there,” from the top of Streatley-hill, just now as slippery as only chalk recently rained upon can be, by the racing stables with which they are sprinkled. Trudging over these hills the unsophisticated traveller plumps now and then upon establishments which are not ambitious enough for country seats, and far too—I regret to write this, but it is true—far too neatly and beautifully prim in their exquisite order and cleanliness to be farms. The quality of the turf has had something to do with attracting them to these downs, but in all probability their loneliness much more. The first man who planted a racing-stable in this part of the country was Butcher Cumberland, who built an immense breeding and training establishment at Cat’s Gore, not far from Ilsley. The stables are gone now; but they can never be forgotten, for at Cat’s Gore was bred the celebrated Eclipse. Ilsley and Russley, Lambourne and Kingsclere, have sent out many worthy successors of that famous racer. “When shall the glory fade” of Teddington and Thormanby, of Lord Lyon and Doncaster—equine monarchs illustrious, both by race and achievement? The names of the little hamlets dotted here and there over the wide expanse of downs are perpetually reminding one of the stud-book, as Sydmon-ton, Liddington, and so forth. There is yet another sport than horse-racing, held

in high honour on these breezy uplands. It is but a morning’s walk from Streatley-hill, where I am standing, to East Ilsley and Scutchamore, the highest point of the Berkshire downs; and thence the ancient Ridgeway leads right into the Ashdown coursing country. Ashdown-park, so remotely situated that it looks as if it dropped down from the sky, is said to have been built, on the site of a farmhouse, by Sir William Craven, sometime Lord Mayor of London, who fled thither from the plague. Wherever a greyhound is seen, there is the name of Ashdown revered as the finest coursing-ground in the world. An immense range of open downs is favourable of course to the sport; but this is not all. The upland hares which abound in this favoured spot are of a variety remarkable for size, strength, and fleetness, bearing generally about as much resemblance to a plump specimen of the Norfolk kind, as a trained athlete to an alderman; and the long-tails must be of sterling breed, and in prime condition, to live the pace with Ashdown “puss.” Ashdown has historic as well as coursing fame. Either there, or “somewhere about,” or on Uffington-hill, where the White Horse is cut through the green turf into the chalk underneath, King Alfred won or lost a battle with the Danes, and the White Horse was engraved on the hill-side in honour of that, or more probably, of some earlier feat of arms, or perhaps as a superstitious observance! This is what the “gentle antiquary” has brought King Alfred to in the centre of his dominions, and within hail of Wantage, where a statue was recently set up in remembrance of him! Despite incredulity and uncertainty, however, there is what my friend Professor Nebelwitz would call an “Alfredismus” about these chalk hills. There is the blowing-stone, “King Aalfard’s boogie harn,” King Alfred’s thorn, his palace, or rather, the site thereof, his well, and a great deal more of the Saxon warrior and law-giver than need be discussed in this place.

Turning once more towards the Thames, I descend through a delightful lane bordered by great Berkshire hedgerows, studded with wild flowers—dog-roses sprawling in wild luxuriance, blooming nettle, and purple marshmallow, a great wealth of wild mint, and light yellow charlick. As the wild flowers come to an end at the entrance of the village, their place is supplied by rose and clematis hanging over the cottage doors, and great banks

of nasturtiums running riot in the gardens. There are two shoemakers at Streatley, probably rivals in business; certainly, in horticulture. Their little houses are literally buried under rose, clematis, and convolvulus, against which a vine struggles desperately to hold its own. The red roofs of Streatley and Goring give the inexpressible charm of colour to the richly-wooded scene. As the rain just now is coming down smartly, I ensconce myself in that home of the angler, The Swan, famous for the tenderness of its chickens and the good-humour of host and hostess. The Swan is built, as it should be, on the edge of the river just above the long bridge. As I sit in the low-roofed little parlour, and watch the sun start through the clouds as a light breeze chases the shower before it, the scene recalls with marvellous fidelity the Island of Shalott, where

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver,
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river,
Flowing down to Camelot.

There are the willows and the island, the "space of flowers," purple, white, and yellow, the great burdocks, and the waving reeds. The "four gray walls and four gray towers" are not there, of course, the only building on the island being the toll-house, and the only representative of Sir Lancelot is a lazy artist, who is catching gudgeons while he should be sketching a "sympathetic" sky. From the bridge at Streatley it is pleasant to drop down stream to Pangbourne, over a magnificent reach of water fringed by deep banks of water-plants, tall purple loosestrife, tiny forget-me-not, and snowy meadow-sweet. Beyond these stretch meadows full of kine, and above, on the hill-side, are fields of stubble and woods. Hardly less beautiful than Streatley and Goring, are Pangbourne and Whitchurch. Just where the stream rushes over the weir, is a little fishing inn and angler's rest, where I have enjoyed many pleasant tranquil mornings in the old wicked time when there was horse-racing at Reading. Perhaps the contrast between the feverish excitement of the race-course, and the calm pursuit of gudgeon and perch under the mighty poplars, which rear their tall graceful shafts above the humble pollard willows, heightened the sense of enjoyment; but there is no doubt as to the supreme luxury of a "header" off the camp-shedding into the swirling, sparkling water—a

plunge bracing the nerves for the less healthy afternoon's "plunging" in another place. I cannot recollect the time when there was not a big trout lurking about Pangbourne, either in the river or in the imagination of mine host of The Angler's Rest, whose wife's cookery, so far as chops and eggs and bacon were concerned, was above all praise. After nearly a dozen years' absence, I pull down the reach to Pangbourne, and am amazed to find the place exactly as I left it—the Temperance Hotel, as we used to call the licenseless "Rest," and the little Swan Inn next door for those whose unholy tastes require something stronger than tea to "make the fish bite" withal. There is a thrill of excitement in the little parlour of The Swan, for a couple of rare fish caught this morning lie gasping on the table, like a piscatorial conundrum to the 'prentice angler driven in by the rain. One jaunty youth pronounces them to be "bronze roach;" another young gentleman airily dubs them "tench;" an unmistakable cockney maintains that they are "Thames carp;" while another mutters something about "golden bream." They are really very fine "rudd," fishes more often talked and written about than caught, their capture on the present occasion having been effected by a professional fisherman. The metallic gleam on their plump sides and handsome red fins excites unbounded admiration, and every angler present sighs to think they have not fallen to his rod, as they would "look beautiful stuffed." It is a droll notion this of stuffing fish and putting them into glass cases, instead of eating them. Perhaps the enthusiast who, towards the end of his angling career, has his hall and study well lined with stuffed fish, experiences a species of solemn joy in contemplating them; but this extraordinary mental condition can only be guessed at by ordinary mortals. Nevertheless, the sentiment of the company is so distinctly pronounced in favour of stuffing the brace of handsome rudd, that I am ashamed to make the proposition lurking in my unregenerate mind to have them cooked for my dinner, and am fain to fall back upon mutton-chops. The angler and his haunts seem, like the brook which contains his quarry, to go on for ever; but Reading races and the "plungers" who went to them a dozen years ago, where are they?

Another haunt of artist and angler is Wargrave, where the "Loddon slow, with

silver alders crown'd," slinks rather than falls into the Thames. Here is the George and Dragon Inn, for which two well-known artists painted the sign. There is much pleasant dawdling and paddling about Wargrave, and rare bathing towards Shiplake Lock, where many a time and oft I have stretched my limbs in the clear cool water, pondering, as I pulled down stream afterwards, on the fate of the author of Mr. Barlow, that terrible schoolmaster of Harry Sandford and Tommy Merton, who was always "improving the occasion." Mr. Day was a pedagogue at heart, and would always be training or breaking in something or other. His success was not quite equal to his expectations, for his experiment of wife-training broke down altogether. Nowise dashed, he tried his hand at breaking in horses, or rather at riding them in an uneducated condition. This experiment was conclusive, for a young horse ran away with him and broke his neck, a fate which the unhappy youths who have read Sandford and Merton will probably think he richly deserved.

With the orgies of Medmenham, real or imaginary, and the glories of Henley Regatta, the world is tolerably familiar; but within the last few years the aspect of the Henley celebration has changed, as much as that of the University boat-race from Putney to Mortlake. It was once a quiet gathering mainly of University and county folk, but of late the Aquatic Bedouin has marked it for his own, and the preparations for camping-out in the Henley week are on a gigantic scale. The woods and meadows from Cookham to Marsh Lock are filled with tents, sprung up like gigantic mushrooms, and tenanted by every sort and condition of riparian nomad, from him who comes armed with all the artillery of Fortnum and Mason, to the weaker brother who nourishes "the missis and the kids" on cold junk and luke-warm beer. From a genuine boat-race meeting, Henley, with its old-fashioned inn, immortalised by Shenstone, has become as much an aquatic Ascot as the great University race an aquatic Derby. Thither spurts and sputters, puffs and blows every steam-launch in going order, and the sight of Remenham-reach in the early morning before the course is cleared is a sight worth seeing. It is a sort of combination triumph of the principle of athleticism, and of that determination to make holidays, which is gaining so rapidly upon all of us Englishmen. I like holidays

myself, but being of a serious, not to say melancholy turn, am no longer at home at Henley. A solitary paddle about Cookham in the crisp days of October and early November, when Cliefden-woods have put on the thousand brilliant hues of autumn, suits my mood of mind much better than the heat and crowd and glare of Henley in June. There is plenty to see in autumn by the riverside, and to those who love animals for their own sake there are few more amusing sights than the great water-rats taking their morning bath, or sitting up like rabbits and sunning themselves at the entrance to their nests. I am aware that rats are not popular because they are destructive. But so are many more exceedingly beautiful and highly-organised creatures.

ANOTHER NATIVE GENTLEMAN.*

A STORY.

IN Malay lands the seeker after native gentility finds a choice of types. Every Malay is a gentleman in some senses of the word. He is brave and courteous, he restrains the vulgar outbreak of passion, and is very often truthful. He does not work more than he can help; and abandons to the Chinaman, if possible, all dirty occupations. His person is always cleanly; for the "orang laüt" may be called the stanchest, if least erudite, of Musulmans. He dresses as well as he can afford—better, indeed, as a rule—and his fashions are manly as graceful. What may be set against these gentlemanly traits of character I shall not here put down; for I am very fond of the Malays, and their demerits do not "come into my brief" at this moment.

After reflection, I do not think of a better example for my case than Douroup, the old executioner of Sarawak. An official of that sort is not regarded with aversion in the Far East; partly, maybe, because the mode of execution is dignified for both parties, and also because such an officer is evidently indispensable. I knew Douroup very well, before he called on me, one morning, in the pretty bungalow which Sir James Brooke had assigned to us for residence. With an air unmatched by pursuivant or chamberlain, he used to stalk upon the rajah's heels when he took a stroll, shielding that "good white head"

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 17, p. 280, "A Native Gentleman."

with a state-umbrella. Pleasant to behold was Douroup on these occasions. Unthinking visitors laughed to see him, but I never could perceive the joke. Grave loyalty and self-respectful performance of that which a brave old man regards as honourable duty are not absurd. A sympathetic smile one might allow oneself, but no more.

In picturesque effect Douroup could not be surpassed on these occasions. He had a stature much exceeding the average of his small race, limbs vigorous and sinewy, a thin, hard-featured countenance. His little eyes twinkled sternly under lids triangular, so deeply were they wrinkled; his large mouth was squarely set, like a trap of steel; his broad, bony jaws had an air of well-tried determination. Douroup possessed a snowy beard—what might be called a goatee, and at least two dozen hairs on each side the upper lip. Not even his umbrella of scarlet silk and fringed, nor his kris of that special shape which belongs to the executioner, distinguished him more proudly from "the herd." One Malay in a thousand may possess enough moustache to swear by, but I never saw among that people a beard like Douroup's. I have his likeness before me as I write; my drawing was photographed by Vernon Heath, of Piccadilly, fourteen years ago. It shows the old man's figure, upright as a spear, arrayed in pink cotton *bajo* or jersey, fitting like a glove on his gaunt muscles; petticoat of tartan, red and green, gracefully looped in folds to show the handle of his official kris; trousers snowy white, falling over bony ankles.

Thus arrayed he came to my bungalow, intent to sell a handsome "parang" of native manufacture. I admired and bought the weapon; in fact, it hangs now on my wall, with many another yet more fantastic. The bargain was apparently concluded to Douroup's satisfaction, for he laughed in grim delight, showing teeth like ebony with prismatic lights upon them.

The blackening is done with the oil of burnt cocoanut in early youth, and the foil-like appearance, so startling to newcomers, may be due to decay or to the immoderate use of penang, as the betel-nut is called by Malays.

He asked if I cared for a Lanun kris, and sent his slave-boy to fetch it, seating himself meanwhile on my invitation. He rolled a "plug" of betel, tobacco, and lime from the bamboo case hanging at his waist, enveloped it in a pepper-leaf, and began to chew gravely.

My interpreter at that time was Ali Kasut, or Ali of the Shoes, so called from his invariable habit of "sporting" that article of luxury. It was nothing less than a superstition with my excellent follower. He had the small and delicate feet of his race, but outspread at the toes by walking barefoot at an age when, of all possible extravagancies, a boot would have seemed to Ali the most absurd. This formation made him difficult to fit. No lady's shoe, such as he loved, could be too small, or too slender, or too high at the instep, but his prehensile toes demanded greater breadth to work in than would be needful for an Irish giant. Ali overcame this difficulty by slitting up the front part of the boot at either side. Thus he allowed his toes fair play, quite indifferent to appearances or utility.

Whilst the executioner surveyed me with dignity and decorum, Ali observed: "This Lanun kris at fight of rainbow betakenbe."

I should observe that my interpreter was a much-travelled man, who had dwelt at Brunei and Johore, where people who respect themselves talk "pangaran," or court Malay. The peculiarity of this speech is a redundancy of prefixes and affixes, which are used with the most delicate discrimination. Though, I believe, much more correct, it bears no greater resemblance to the common form of words than does classic Greek to Romaic, and in a very few generations it will become a dead language. Meanwhile Ali Kasut rejoiced in his accomplishment, and transferred the theory of it to English when addressing persons of importance. He told me once that the reason he did not understand great "tuans" when they spoke together, whilst he could follow easily the conversation of stray sailors and such like, was because the former spoke pangaran English, and he naturally concluded that the great difference lay in prefixes and affixes. Whence his mode of speech.

I supposed that a kind of mythological relic was to be offered me. "The kris must be very old," I said gravely.

"Oh, old. Malay man like swords olden—fifty years perhapsbe."

"And who took it?"

"He there!" the interpreter answered, pointing to Douroup.

"What!" I exclaimed. "He has fought a rainbow?"

"Tidak! Lanun man he rainbow fought-enby. Douroup he rainbow withum."

I concluded that the weapon in its way

had been drawn in sacrilegious assault of that aerial phenomenon. Douroup chewed with respectful indifference. He did not seem to take any special pride in the recollection of his victorious efforts on behalf of the rainbow.

"Was anybody hurt?" I asked, keeping my countenance.

"Lanun all killedness, but some betakenbe."

"So perish all who would attack the beneficent powers! What punishment did the rainbow inflict on those betakenbe?"

"They shotum! Rajah in Englander. He hearum madness."

"What?"

"Yes. Rajah Mudah, Captain Brooke you know, left hereaway. Old rajah in Englandness very angry when teldful. He want Lanun man alive."

It suddenly flashed upon my bewilderment that the Rainbow in question was a gunboat, which had several times been engaged with Lanun pirates. Doubtless Douroup had captured his kris in such an action. I asked for details, and my interpreter was rapidly turning the narrative into pangaran English when the executioner's boy came back.

He carried a weapon of beautiful shape and temper, nearly two feet long in the blade and an inch and a half wide, waving in graceful twists almost to the tip. The edges were sharp and bright, but an inch-broad strip of rough metal ran between them, deeply channelled and damascened. This peculiar effect is obtained, I believe, by welding hard metal into soft, and then eating into the latter with acids. The hilt was covered with silver wire, twined and plaited to imitate different sizes of string. This simple but tasteful style of ornamentation is much affected by Malay silversmiths.

Before coming to terms with the executioner for this specimen of piratic art, I begged to hear the tale hanging to it. Ali Kasut's idiom was droll, but it did not help to the clear comprehension of a story. I had need of more patience than could be asked of the most courteous reader. Done into vulgar English, Douroup's tale ran thus. I tell it in the first person, and I "colour" it a little, for the narrative reached me in a very bald state. The facts, of course, are historical:

"Two years ago," said the executioner—this adventure came to my ears in 1863—"my wife, my brother's son, and I

were returning from a visit to Salang Salang, where my sons had a contract for turtle-eggs. What little wind there was did not favour us, but the rajah had sent for me. We paddled and paddled. Just opposite to Sanjong Api, a large prau came suddenly in view, running fast alongshore with a stiff breeze. I said to my wife, 'If a man had been sailing thus across Sarawak bay upon the morning we were married, his heart would have died within him at sight of a vessel like that.' She said, 'Thanks to Allah and the white rajah, no pirates dare come here!'

"The prau skimmed in like a shark. When we looked again there were two more behind it; when we looked a third time there were seven in sight, all flying towards us. My wife said, 'Thirty years have passed since our wedding-day, and Allah is merciful; but I wish we stood all safe ashore at Santubong!' We turned the canoe and paddled for life. One after another the praus came round Sanjong Api until the bay was crowded with them. We set sail, but they flew. Within an hour the Balignini trained a jingal on us, but the ball fell short. I said to my wife, 'Will you live to be a pirate's slave?' 'Kill me,' she said. We went on with sail and paddle, but it seemed hopeless.

"Suddenly the Badger gunboat appeared, steering down the river with all sails set. We shouted and embraced each other, for sure the Balignini would clear off at sight of a gunboat. But they did not notice. The foremost prau fired again, and the ball took off Kassim's head. He fell upon my wife, nearly upsetting the canoe.

"The Badger held on, steering between us, but she could not have arrived in time. A great black prau swept towards us on the wind. Her bows were shaped as a dragon's head, and the white water looked like teeth in her jaws. The pearl of two immense natuna shells made eyes. From their fighting deck the pirates yelled at us, but fired no more. The reis of the Badger saw our distress and discharged a twelve-pound gun. The shot flashed from wave to wave and buried itself half a mile beyond. But the warning was enough. The Balignini stood dumfounded for an instant, their silk scarves fluttering in the breeze, then shook their weapons at the gunboat with a sudden gleam like fire. They ran up and down their fighting-

deck, and chanted their war-song, but they turned, all the fleet, firing as they went. The little Badger followed till afternoon, when the swift pirates had all vanished. They quitted Sarawak waters, and at Port Sirik caught a lot of British subjects—Indians. And at Port Malludu they met a fleet of Lanuns from Sulu, and cruised in company till part of them went home.

"I buried Kassim at Kuching, and my wife did not long survive the fright. The rajah consoled me, but I made spells for the Balignini. Allah, the All-Merciful, saw my distress.

"After the New Year's feast, the rajah sent me to Muka, where I had kinsfolk. My heart was water, and grief had dried my marrow. One day a boat came flying up the river; fear sat upon the faces of the crew. They brought a message for Tuan Helms. Six Lanun praus, lying in the bay, challenged him to come and fight. The people fainted; their cry rang to heaven. Tuan Helms summoned the chief men. We met in the fort, and the tuan spoke to us. He said: 'The Rajah Mudah is lying at Bintulu with the Rainbow. Here is a letter; who will carry it?'

"The Datus looked to the ground in thought, for across the river mouth lay six pirate vessels, swift as eagles. Twenty men kept watch on each of them night and day. Tuan Helms said: 'I cannot go, for my hands are soft and white, unused to paddle. But you are nobles and chiefs, skilful in the water. The people feed you, and they faint in alarm. Who will go?'

"They did not speak, and he said again: 'The man who does it will be honoured amongst all the orang laüt; the Rajah Mudah will set him on high. Your forefathers were brave. They did not fear death. Have their sons become women?'

"I rose and spoke: 'These men of Muka are not my people, oh tuan! But I hear the helpless ones who cry. Give me a fast canoe and I will carry the letter.'

"They found me the swiftest boat in Muka, the Anak Ular (young snake), which had won every race on New Year's feast. At dusk I set out. The imaun laid it upon all the faithful that they should pray the saints to intercede for me all night. Every house in Muka had its candle burning, and the murmur of prayers reached Allah's throne. He

heard them. His hand drew clouds across the sky, and opened the sluices of the rain. All through the evening it fell softly, and the Lanun scouts lay close.

"In an hour and a half, for I reconnoitred at each turning of the stream, I saw open water and the praus. They lay anchored, four across the bar, and one beneath each bank, lit up as for a feast. The rolling waves glittered for a hundred yards around. Big fires blazed on shore also. Canoes came and went. At the bows of every vessel a crowd of pirates sat or moved, black against the light, and on the fighting-deck above stood the sentries. Roaring laughter echoed in faint bursts across the surge, with singing, and sharp screams of pain.

"I knew not what to do. After an hour's waiting, the mirth and the confusion only grew. If I could safely approach the fires ashore, and appear to start from thence, it seemed likely I might get through unnoticed, for there were many boats like mine passing to and fro.

"My heart was dry as an empty kernel when I stole across the river, and dropped down under shadow of the bank. The noise grew louder and louder in my ears, the light more dangerous. Suddenly, at the spit, I came on a throng of canoes which the Lanuns had surprised. There should be one sentry, at least, over them. Long I peered into the dark, and at length perceived him sitting under a tree. Not an alligator could have floated past and he not see it, in that blaze of light. I drew back, landed, and crept behind him like a serpent. The sweat poured off me. At length I reached the tree, rose up, and found he was asleep.

"Weh! I could have killed the dog. My kris was in my hand, and I know where the life divides under a man's shoulder. But it was dark beneath the trees. My hand might miss: he might cry. I took the spear beside him, and hung a cloth upon it, before his eyes. Then I quickly regained my canoe, passed without notice, and drew as close to the fire as I dared.

"There were dozens of men round it, slaves tied to trees, and pirates. A big Lanun was singing and beating the tom-tom; his surong and head-handkerchief glittered with gold. There were women, too, attending on them. I took my paddle and steered boldly out, to pass between the farthest vessels towards Bintulu. At

that moment I knew of a truth that Allah heard our prayers, for the rain descended suddenly in a great splash, and the camp broke up, laughing and shouting. Those on board also ran to cover, all except the sentries above. I dared not look up, but as I passed along I felt they were watching me.

"I hoped to slip between the third and fourth praus, which were very large, carrying eighty warriors at least. Then would come the moment of danger. The beating of my heart sounded louder than the rattling of the rain. As I passed between, looking out for cables, I saw again that black dragon's head and the big pearl eyes. The paddle almost slipped from my hand. At that instant the sentries hailed. I could frame no words to answer, but pulled with all my might. They rushed and trampled over the deck, seeking their guns, which had been placed under cover. They shouted for a canoe, and I heard them vaulting into it from above.

"The Anak Ular never made a race like that, with Lanun balls pattering round her, and the clank of Lanun paddles in her wake. But at ten yards' distance I was out of sight, so sheeted fell the rain. When it ceased, twenty minutes after, there was no boat on the sea but mine. I spread my wet carpet, and bowed myself times seventy-seven.

"In a day and a half I reached Bintulu. The Rajah Mudah gave me honour before all the people. Then he whitened the steamer, deck and funnel, got up fires with dry wood, and started. We hoped to find the praus still lying before Muka. But some foolish youths there, catching a party of scouts, sent one of them back with defiance to say the Rainbow was at hand. So they broke up at once, half putting to sea, half skirting the coast, in hopes to hide when they saw the steamer's smoke on the horizon. So had they often escaped the English cruisers. But our Rajah Mudah knew their tricks, and all the coast was afire. A swift boat came to warn him, and we held alongshore, when each village sent us news or signalled. For such insults as that of the Balignini a year before, and now this of the Lanuns, had not been dreamt of in Sarawak since the rajah chastised them.

"After two days' search we came upon three praus, making for the open water. They saw that no safety could be found alongshore, nor did they recognise the

steamer till too late for most of them, for she made no smoke, and the whitening deceived the dogs. Weh! the Lanuns are seamen! They turned back, flying like hawks. The Rainbow is swift, but she could never have caught them had the wind been fair. We got within range, and they dodged and twisted, swinging the big praus round as on a pivot. His Highness himself trained the guns, but could not hit those magic craft. 'Go ahead, full speed!' he cried at last; 'Give them the stem!'

"We went ahead—we whizzed through the sea. The shore lay only two miles off or so. The Lanuns saw what was meant. In their silks and gold cloths they gathered on the fighting-deck, a gallant show, and chanted their war-song. We came up to the first through a storm of bullets. The bowsprit pierced that crowd of men. We saw a hell of faces just beneath, flashing krises, pistols smoking. The slaves screamed below, the pirates yelled above. A shock and a grating noise! The prau went down cut in two. Then it was fighting hand to hand. They swarmed along the bowsprit, swords in teeth. They leaped and clung upon our taffrail. We met them. 'To the next!' cried His Highness, whilst we fought, and 'Aye, aye, sir!' Tuan Hewat shouted back. The decks had been scarcely cleared when another prau was overtaken. Only few of us could reach the forecastle in time, and fifty warriors at least leaped aboard. It was well that the Rajah Mudah had embarked a hundred trusty warriors at Bintulu, for the Lanuns fought as they and fiends of Eblis only can.

"'Go ahead!' His Highness cried, in the midst of it, and we went ahead. Half our deck was held by pirates. They fell, one by one, amok to the last, but the third prau escaped among the shallows. We sent a few shots after it whilst steaming away, and killed a great chief. Our people watched, and not a man who landed was alive in half an hour. But the worst of them kept the sea in a small boat, and when the Rainbow had passed by they fled safely to their homes in Sulu.

"We stopped only to pick up swimming slaves, but lost several orang laut on that duty. For the Lanuns beckoned and cried pitifully, keeping their arms under water. When a man reached to save one of them he stabbed or threw his arms about him, and dragged him out, and sank, so that we helped no one who could not pull himself on board by a rope.

"In the night some of the slaves told us what rich plunder had been sent to the bottom of the sea. His Highness said, laughing, 'If any of you orang laüt like to jump aboard the last prau, and take what you can, I give you leave!' 'And white men, too, sir?' asked the tuan engineer. 'Everyone but Captain Hewat,' said His Highness; 'he will get his reward from Government!' Next morning we caught the rest of the pirate fleet, and fired no shot, but steered into them. The first prau and the second we ran down without much loss. When it came to the last it was the dragon craft! I crawled out on the bowsprit, as did others, but they fell, splash, splash! before the Lanun fire. The Rainbow spun along, and when she almost touched the pirate vessel, the tuan engineer came crushing through our men, swung himself on the bowsprit, and forced by me. We shot into the thickest of the Lanuns. Weh, tuan! I thought the Afreets had my body! They now pressed too close to strike. The white man tumbled amongst them with a shout, snatching here a golden-hilted kris, there a jewelled dagger. I got nothing but a stab on the shoulder—see?—and this tulu blade which I offer to you, tuan. Look you, the tuan engineer was very big and stout. The Lanun man could not hold against his weight. He secured two handfuls of fine things in an instant, and then down, down we went, as if to the very bottom of the sea. And what will you give me for the kris, tuan?"

I forget what I gave him, but his story seemed cheap at the price. The kris hangs in a place of honour on my wall.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER VI. I GO A JOURNEY.

I COULD not really question the honesty or the honour of Paul. It was not merely that he was my brother-in-law, the husband of Doris, and dearly loved by her; there was something about the man that forbad and repelled the slur of suspicion. The faults and defects of his character did not incline towards treachery or cruelty.

Yet originally, I own I had viewed him

with some disfavour; although we had met at Mr. Grisdale's house, breathing the same atmosphere of political enthusiasm, and were engaged in writing for the same newspaper; although he professed revolutionary sentiments, and was an exile because of his opinions. Assuredly he was on these accounts entitled to my regard. Nevertheless I found myself prejudiced against him. He seemed to me without genuine earnestness for the cause he advocated; he possessed a certain gift of words, and could speak with bitter scorn of his political foes, could describe eloquently the wrongs and sufferings of his country; but I judged him to be a rebel out of sheer indolence and the cynicism that is born of persistent ill-fortune; a dilettante conspirator to whom revolt against constituted authority was not a trade so much as an entertainment. He regarded revolutions as many Englishmen esteemed the Charter, as the one indispensable, unfailing panacea; making its absence an excuse for much sloth and many follies, for mocking neglect of every other duty, for dull apathy touching every other topic, and meantime active only in disaffection, in seditious speeches, and treasonous practices. Until he could benefit mankind according to his own prescriptions, he was content to sit idly apart, cherishing the whiteness of his hands, toying with cigarettes and dominoes in cheap coffee-houses, working only to provide himself with the poorest necessities of life.

He was an instance, as I thought, of the ruinous effects of the traditions of rebellion and discontent—handed down like an hereditary disease from one generation to another. In such wise his life had been absolutely wasted. Certainly it was strange that I, accused of being so half-hearted a political partisan, should in my turn be charging Paul Riel with insufficient fervour. But I judged foolishly and purblindly in the matter. Paul's faults were in truth to be ascribed to the wrongs inflicted upon his family and upon himself. The results of injustice are not easily stayed and localised; they extend oftentimes through the ages, striking and wounding the innocent even at remote distances. From his earliest years Paul had been taught to believe himself, his sire and grandsire before him, the victims of tyranny and oppression. A sense of injustice had grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, the while it had rankled within

him like a poison, now drugging him into drowsiness, now inflaming him into mad acts of rebellion.

And a further confession I am about to make. I believed, in the first instance, that Paul Riel loved Catalina. She was so beautiful, it seemed to me, that all who approached her must become her lovers. I loved her, and my love made me jealous and suspicious. Moreover, Paul was so handsome; if he loved her I persuaded myself that he would not love in vain. This view of Paul did not commend him to my good opinion. At times I was tempted to hate him because of his handsome face and the irresistible air of romance that seemed to attend upon him, and because there appeared to be such great danger of Catalina loving him.

As a matter of fact, Paul had not loved Catalina, nor had Catalina loved Paul. In both, perhaps, admiration had been stirred, but not affection. Hearts are constituted and governed mysteriously. Here the arrows of love pierce through and through; here they fall as upon adamant, and are flung off blunted and broken, leaving no dint or scratch behind them. Here are men ready to lay down their lives for this woman, whom these others pronounce wholly uncharming, and pass by as though she were the merest of lay figures.

As a child I loved Catalina—the reader has been so informed in the earlier portion of this chronicle—and I loved her still, and more and more as the days went by, and I passed from youth to manhood. Her store of beauty had increased, and yet I counted it her chief charm that she had changed so little. Something of the wonted loveliness of childhood had from the first been absent from her face, always finely shaped, with a distinct grace of outline pertaining to complete growth, and occupied at times by curiously grave looks, plaintive and thoughtful expressions. She was still “the little girl next door,” for all her greater majesty of stature and movement and more womanly symmetry; she was still the delight of her grandsire and the sunshine of his house, sharing the animation of his sentiments, and aiding him in his editorial labours; while I adored her still as when I was a poet in a pinafore, writing verses in her honour, if my devotion had now acquired maturer form and substantiality. My love for Catalina had made me a poet—if consistently with modesty I may so describe myself; and perhaps it was owing to the same influ-

ence that I became a democrat; desire to win her favour shaping my political convictions and colouring my writings, until at last Cupid had little difficulty in presenting me to the world as a Chartist.

I had not told her of my love. Perhaps a boyish diffidence restrained me, or I feared my speech might break a spell, and end a dream that was very full of happiness. For the while it was sufficient to me to see her, to be near her. I worshipped not the less sincerely because of my closed lips. The pleasure of loving her was not diminished by the fact that she did not know of my love. My only pains arose from dread of the advance of other suitors. For a long time I noted, with a sort of gnawing jealousy, my brother Nick's manifest admiration of her. I knew that he professed love for her. And while I denounced his love as unworthy of her, I greatly dreaded the effect of his good looks, for he was as handsome as Paul Riel.

My poverty, too, hindered me; and I shrank from seeming treachery towards Mr. Grisdale. For a long time I had difficulty in earning the merest subsistence. Could I ask her to become my wife merely to starve with me? Could I bring desolation upon Mr. Grisdale's home by stealing away his Lina?

But perhaps the strongest reason for holding my peace was that I did not love hopefully. I could perceive in Catalina no return of the affection I lavished upon her; it seemed to glance off and fall from her, leaving her wholly uninfluenced—as small missiles might strike harmlessly against chain-mail. Apparently she was unconscious of the fact of my love. She regarded me simply as a friend. She would not or could not see that I was also a lover.

There were symptoms of violent agitation in France. A political crisis appeared to be imminent.

“It is not only a question of changing the ministry,” said Mr. Grisdale; “the ball has been set rolling—where is it to stop? The people, constrained to take arms against the Government, will not be content with moderate reforms. France is mined; the air is charged with electricity; the muttering of the coming storm is already audible; the explosion is very near now. Already the ground is trembling beneath the feet of the king and his ministers.”

“What has happened?” I asked. Mr.

Grisdale's figurative method of speech was sometimes very confusing.

"The right of public meeting has been denied; the law has been outraged; the reform banquets are to be suppressed by brute force; liberty is in danger; the garrison of Paris has been largely increased. It seems to me that the days of July are coming over again, and that Louis Philippe is to fall as fell Charles the Tenth; that Guizot is to share the fate of Prince Polignac. Retributive justice! The oppressors of the people are sooner or later its victims."

A messenger handed me a letter. It was from the editor of *The Hourglass*. He requested to see me as soon as possible; and in the interests of the paper, and as its special correspondent, begged me to be ready to start for Paris by the night mail. A passport, I was told, would be provided for me.

"*Ça ira*," said Mr. Grisdale, gleefully rubbing his hands. "The *Hourglass* must have later news, better news, than has yet reached me. It is clear that France is shifting its neck from beneath the ministers' feet. The nation is moving, is uplifting itself, is advancing—woe to those who stand in its way! Basil, it seems to me that I can smell gunpowder, that I can already hear the clashing of swords. There are fifty thousand troops in Paris. Well, there is a nation to fight against them. But the thing promises to be very serious. You will go, of course? It is a magnificent chance for you."

"Yes, of course. I must go; but——"

"But what?"

"I dread to leave Doris."

"Have no fear on that score. Trust her to me, to Catalina."

"She will not think me cruel? What am I saying? No; she will rejoice at my going. I may bring her tidings of Paul."

"Ah yes, you may hear something of Paul," said Mr. Grisdale, abstractedly.

"I can arrange, no doubt, to have part of my salary as correspondent paid to Doris. I cannot go away with the thought that she may be in want."

"You talk idly, Basil. Do you know me so little? Have you no faith in Lina? Doris shall be our charge, she shall want for nothing. It will rejoice us to care for and cherish her, and so to make your mind easy while you are far from us. But—there is another thing—you spoke of Paul. You are resolved to find him if you can? I may take that for granted? Hush! We must not be overheard, this is really im-

portant. I think I can help you to find Paul." He reduced his voice to a mysterious whisper. "At least I can put you in the right way to enquire concerning him. Now listen attentively. Commit what I say to memory, but do not write down a word of it, for written documents are cruel evidence against one sometimes. When you are in Paris you will go to No. 13, Rue St. Benoit. On the sixth floor you will find a young artist, M. George Guichardet. You will introduce yourself to him. You will mention my name to him. You will tell him plainly what you want. Have no fear; he will frankly assist you not only as to Paul, but in regard to your correspondence, especially if you show him this."

He took from his pocket a small flat piece of copper of a triangular shape. I read engraved upon it the words, "Union, Honneur, Patrie." On the other side of it appeared, "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité."

"You need not know fully what this signifies. It will be sufficient for you that it procures you the information you seek. Only it will be well for you to be discreet in exhibiting it. France is full of spies. The agent of police will be always at your elbow. Be circumspect, and be silent. It is always the talkers who get into trouble. Strike a blow for liberty, if you can; but remember it is not as a combatant you go to France, but as a correspondent, and a good cause can oftentimes be as well served by the pen as by the sword."

I spoke to Doris of my errand to Paris. She could hardly be persuaded that my character as correspondent was not assumed, and that I was journeying with any other object than to look for Paul.

"Basil, how good of you! You will find him for me, will you not? I may trust you? You are so calm and composed, but you are brave, too, and I know you will spare no effort to find him. Basil, you have made me so happy! Think how wretched I must have been when even the thought of the chance of your seeing Paul once more brings tears of joy into my eyes! And you will write to me in any case?"

I assured her that I would write as often as possible.

"Paul promised to write," she said, "but no letter has come to me. Surely you will keep faith with me, Basil? Because you know you have seen for yourself how miserable it makes me, how it kills me to be without news—to be waiting, waiting for letters that never come—it breaks my heart, it breaks my heart! If you don't

write, Basil, I shall follow you and find out Paul for myself. But you will write. And when you see Paul, as you will—you must see him—you will note how he looks and what he says, and treasure up his every word to tell me again. I shall want to know everything about him. Nothing that concerns him can be too trivial to interest me. Fill pages of your letters with news of Paul. Promise me that you will, Basil."

"And have you no message for me to take to him?"

"Message? Of course I have; a hundred and more. Tell him that I love him—but he knows that, he won't want to be told that. Tell him that he has been very cruel not to write to me. No, don't tell him that. I can't send him reproaches. I can only send him kind words. But tell him to write to me; tell him to love me always; tell him, above all things, to come back to me; tell him to come quickly to his poor, fond, heart-broken wife, and"—she hid her face in my breast as she whispered—"to his child that has yet to be born!"

Poor darling, how her cheeks burned, when I kissed her, and said good-bye to her!

Mr. Grisdale took hearty leave of me. "Heaven speed you, Basil," he said; "we shall be glad to have you home again safe and sound."

"Is there danger?" asked Catalina, with something of a start.

"They say every bullet has its billet," said Mr. Grisdale. "But Basil goes to write, not to fight."

"After all it may come to nothing," I observed.

"It may be a mere flash in the pan. But you are going to the land of revolutions, and I count upon a real explosion. As I said before, I think I smell gunpowder. I wish I were going with you."

Catalina looked at him and sighed. Her face was unusually pale.

It was in the train, proceeding to Dover, that I read with surprise in an evening newspaper an announcement of the death of Miss Leveridge, "suddenly, at her residence in Powis-place, Queen's-square, Bloomsbury." Poor Miss Leveridge!

A few more hours and I am in Paris, the tenant of a furnished apartment on the fourth floor of a tall house in the Faubourg

Poissonnière. It is a very small room, and is chiefly occupied by a large stove of white china; but it is fitted up with a sort of cheap luxuriousness in the way of muslin curtains, looking-glasses of a green tinge, unsafe easy chairs and a gilt clock that does not go. I am convinced, however, that I have chosen my lodgings with sound judgment, and with praiseworthy regard for economy. I have discovered, too, that I can dine cheaply at Byron's Tavern, an English house at the back of the Opéra Comique.

From my window I look over certain outbuildings, of low elevation, and obtain a view of the busy courtyard of a large hotel. I can hear the frequent ringing of bells, and see the hurrying hither and thither of waiters and chambermaids and other servants. I can note, too, the proprietor, who sits smoking in a summer house, sipping sugar and water, and otherwise very idle.

On the door-post, as I entered, I noted scrawled in lead pencil, and apparently half erased, the familiar words, "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité." They had not been firmly written, and they had not been effaced with decision. Apparently the time had not come for dealing strongly with them either one way or the other.

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STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VI. COUSIN ALICIA.

WAS the curate to call his cousin, "Madame?"

It was a difficult question, for he felt he did not remember her since the old days—not the least in the world. He knew she was a remarkable, even eccentric, woman; and that she had been a great deal abroad, which, no doubt, accounted for certain foreign, or, at least, un-English, ways that she had about her. She even, he noticed, affected a foreign accent, and he thought it became her. Altogether, he thought he should have a great deal to tell Bessy when he got home. But, meanwhile, what was he to say? He really wished to make an excellent impression, now that his pride was once swallowed. To be called Alicia, after the Countess of Quorne, would be no disadvantage to the little temporary Bessy in after years, and even the curate of St. Anselm's, though he had given up fast bowling, was still a man.

There were several ways open to him by which he might begin a conversation; and he reviewed them all. He might say, "It is a long time since we met;" but then that would imply a rebuke concerning the cause. On the whole, he had better wait for his cousin to suggest Bessy, if she pleased. Or, he might tell her that she was looking very well; but then, why shouldn't she? On the whole, and after due reflection, he felt it safest to fall back upon the easiest and most neutral of all topics. Why should travelled English-

men sneer at one another for always beginning with the weather? We ought to be grateful that we have a weather, if only as the safest, most elastic, most universally applicable means of opening a conversation in the world.

"It is a very fine day—after the storm," said Gaveston. "But," he added, on mature reflection, as if he had gone too far, "I'm afraid last night put an end to the strawberries."

"Strawberries?" asked the lady with a quick smile. "Ah, you know? It is very strange, monsieur, how quick all the stories run about—about me, I mean. Tell me what they say. But, monsieur, will you not sit down? It is tiresome to stand. It was 'great fun'—as you say."

"The story?"

"You have not heard? No? Not how I went last night in a cabaret, The Five Adzes, and drank beer with the men? And, Gran Dio, how they sang! It was just like the Grand Opera."

This Lady Alicia Gaveston—this the Countess of Quorne? It is not too much to say that the curate was shocked, and began to think it just as well that he had not brought Bessy. No wonder she was "hail fellow, well-met," with vagabond painters. Tales of the increasing depravity of the upper classes had reached Deepweald, and Gaveston had always refused to believe scandal of English ladies, and of his own order, for he had passed that extreme youth, when men think it fine and knowing to believe all evil. But when it came to a Countess of Quorne going into a village public-house, and drinking beer with the men—surely it was time for Church and State to part, and for the world to come to an end. He knew the

countess was Bohémienne, and he was not strait-laced; but this was going too far.

His face had not much expression, but it is precisely expressionless faces that are most capable of looking shocked most readily. The lady must have seen it over her fan; her glance passed to his white cravat, and then to the ends of his long whiskers, and a smile of malice passed for a moment through her eyes.

"Yes. It was great fun—as you say. We drank beer out of pewter, very bad beer; and they smoked, oh, such tobacco—I smell all over of it now—it is in my hair. And I flirted with a gamekeeper, till I made the *fille de chambre* divinely jealous. It is better, yes, than Park-lane. Ah, you should see how they looked when I sang to them. You know The Five Adzes, monsieur? No?"

"At Laxton?"

"That is his name. I forget my English—but never mind."

"You have been a great deal abroad?"

"Abroad? Why, I come from abroad now, when I came to London. I like England, but I like abroad best—there it is free. I like to be free."

"Exactly so," said the curate, without a tinge of hypocrisy.

"And The Five Adzes," said the lady, resolved to enjoy the expression on the curate's face as long as possible. "I think I shall go there again on Saturday evening. They are better than the great people—Corpo di Bacco! It is stiff here. I am republican to the heart; I love the poor."

The curate was growing aghast with dismay. Everything seemed turning upside down. Of course, as a clergyman, he loved the poor too; but the phrase, as a phrase, sounded odd to him, and a republican countess, and that countess a Gaveston, was a monstrosity. What did Lord Quorne say to it all? But as to that, he knew that Lord Quorne's heart, though sound, was a cucumber; and he strongly surmised that his cousin Alicia was one who would have more to say to her husband than her husband to her. But what would the county say? Counties are not easily put down, even by countesses.

"There are not many really poor in your own neighbourhood," said Gaveston, feeling himself talking to his cousin Alicia more and more as if she were a stranger in blood, as in all other things, "but there are many in Deepweald; and in my own parish, St. Anselm's——"

"Ah! I will see. And then I met

there a young man, a painter; a very handsome young man. Do you know who?"

"Ah—that's how she picked up Gordon!" thought Gaveston. "And she invited him to her house, I suppose!"—"Oh yes, I know him; that is, I used to—at Oxford, I mean."

"Oxford? Ah yes, I know Oxford. There are a great many young men. Who is he?"

"Fancy picking up a painter in a pot-house, and asking him to Hinchford!" thought Gaveston, now thoroughly disgusted. And he felt a pang of not unnatural jealousy too; here was he, Lady Quorne's own cousin, asked to Hinchford in a way that was nothing less than an insult, while the door seemed opened to any chance vagabond who chose to enter. He was a good-natured young man, but he did not feel good-natured just then, and small blame to him.

"Oh, his father is a cotton-spinner at Manchester, or one of those places." Deepweald looked down upon Manchester.

"A cotton-spinner?"

"Yes—a manufacturer, you know. He was well-off at Oxford—at least, he seemed so, for there's no knowing anything about people in trade. Then he went off without a degree, and was going to be a barrister, but I suppose the truth is, they were ruined, and he had to do what he could. He seems to have done nothing but knock about all over the world it seems—anyhow, he hasn't a penny now. He told me so."

"He has been rich, and is poor? And an artist, then—a real artist, monsieur?"

"He told me he is a painter, and hasn't got a penny. I should have thought he could have done better than that—but I'm afraid there's something wrong."

"It is always wrong to be poor," said the lady softly, and, the curate thought, a little bitterly. "And real artists are often poor. Never mind, it is the world. I am glad I have seen you, so that I know. I like that young man. He is handsome, and he is alive. It is good to go into The Five Adzes, now and then. Are you poor?"

The curate blushed and stared. He thought of Bessy, and did not know what to say. But she did not seem to remember her own question.

"Yes, I like him," she went on. "And he was good about the garde-chasse and the strawberries, and the *femme de chambre*. He gave me a lesson; I keep some temper,

I. Yes, if he is young, and an artist, and good-hearted, he would be poor. But never mind."

"He said he was going to paint your portrait."

"Ah!" she said with a bright look of pleasure. "That is a good idea. Yes, he is to paint my picture—I shall sit for him. Does he live at what you call—Laxton?"

"I don't know where he lives. I haven't seen him for years. He seems to be tramping about the country now."

"What is his name, monsieur, if you please?"

"She asks him to Hinchford, and doesn't even know his name!"—"Gordon—Walter Gordon."

"Gordon!"

The bright smile passed with a vengeance. All her languid, easy grace of posture grew rigid, and she started as if a snake had stung her. All tragedy came back into her face and her frown, and the music left the voice as she almost hissed out the name. Gaveston had never seen such a transformation in his life before. He too started, almost alarmed.

"Yes—Gordon. Walter Gordon. That's his name."

"Ah! I have pain sometimes—but it is soon over. There, monsieur." And she fanned herself back into resolute sunshine, let herself lie back on the sofa again, and took a new caprice—utter silence, as if the curate of St. Anselm's, and her own cousin, were a nobody.

He sat back in his chair, pulling his whiskers, in the resigned state of a man who has fairly made up his mind that he really has nothing to say, and has given up trying. And so they must have sat for full five minutes, he embarrassed, she at ease, when a footman came in with a note on a silver salver. He brought it to Gaveston. Gaveston took the note, looked at the lady, who bowed permission. The note was in Bessy's hand. What could it be? He read it, and turned pale.

"Come at once; I have sent a fly. Little Bessy is very ill.—BESSY."

All the poor fellow's shyness and embarrassment were swept away. He loved his wife well, though mildly; but he dearly loved the child who had put heart even into whisker-pulling. His own heart sank as he handed the note to the lady. She looked surprised at first; but she read it.

"You have a little girl?" she said after a curious look at his white choker,

as if it were awry. "Ah, monsieur." The words sounded like a deep sigh.

"Only one," he said. "I must go."

"Only one? Yes—it is always that; it is always the only one." A new mood was on her—the curate was too much taken up with what he might find at home, to catch an accent in her voice that sounded more like fierceness than sympathy. "Yes—you must go. But wait—an envelope and paper," she said to the footman. "And quick—you hear?" she said, with a little stamp and a frown.

"Is she going to write to Bessy?" thought the curate, miserably.

But she only scribbled a word or two, with her back to him. Then she handed him an envelope, addressed in the most sprawling of hands, simply to "Bessy."

"Now, monsieur—go. Open this yourself when you are at home—not before."

"I am so sorry," said the curate, whose instinct of politeness was not to be forgotten. "Pray make my excuses to Lord Quorne. Perhaps—another time—"

She saw his emotion, and her eyes, which had in this short interview well-nigh passed into every passion under the sun, were now filled with tears of sympathy. She pressed his hand; and in another moment he was in the fly, posting back to Deepweald after his fears, as fast as he could bribe the driver to make the wretched screw go.

The poor fellow was not thinking of his cousin now. But had he been, and could his thoughts have shown her to him, he would have seen her pacing, striding rather, from end to end of the white drawing-room, as if she were in a prison, and burning to be free. There was no longer the fierce frown on her face that he had seen there and wondered at; but her face had the mask off—it is doubtful if her mirror even had seen her as she was now. And it is doubtful if any man now would have called her beautiful. Can you tell what I mean by fixed and ingrained rage?—not the effect of passion, or of many passions, but a savage look, as of some dangerous animal whom the hounds are after. It was as if some heavy blow had fallen upon her, and left the mark for ever, just as it fell. It is hard to describe; but if she knew that look of hers, and wished to feel herself beautiful, it is not wonderful that she should dislike solitude. Walter Gordon had thought the storm over the coffee

unsurpassable in its dramatic intensity. He should have seen her now—only one never sees such a look as this on the stage. It was unspeakably sullen and cold and full of pain—and hungry, too, in a strange kind of way.

There is nothing much more terrible in life, than to follow one's flying thoughts of ill with a slow horse, and a driver that will not put him to a pace beyond his immutable routine. The Medes and Persians, combined, had regulated the pace of the screw from The George at Deepweald. Gaveston felt as if riding a race between life and death; life creeping after, death galloping before. He was a single-minded man, and, as yet, his heart had no room for anything but impatience. Would the milestones never come? He had never thought that a journey could be so long. He tried closing his eyes, to prevent their watching for the milestones and so keeping them away. He looked at his watch a hundred times—and, strange to say, the minutes galloped while the fly crawled. Life was creeping along the road, death flying round the dial.

At last the beautiful gray cathedral tower, rosy once more in the sunset, just as we used to see it and love it years ago, stood out against the sky. Restorers are doing their accursed work on it now, and bad luck to them, for no mortal eye will ever see the exquisite rosy gray of Deepweald tower again. No wonder Deepweald looked down on Manchester and on everywhere. It was very beautiful. Do you remember how it looked—years ago—one broiling day in June, when the Reverend Reginald Gaveston read Tennyson to a Dorcas meeting in general, and to Bessy Swann in particular, while the Deepweald eleven were hard at work on King's Mead; and he, fast bowler as he was, had given up the sport and the cider-cup and all, to read poetry, that neither he nor his audience understood, among fifteen ladies in a furnace, for the sake of a pair of gray eyes waiting for him now? He remembered it all, you may be sure—it was just such another evening as this, but for the heat, and the cathedral tower with its cawing guards looking just the same. But the eyes? He thought of them very tenderly. Were they still watching for him, and wondering when he would come? Or were they—he could not bear to think of it, and wiped his own. And what had that cathedral tower not seen since Deepweald was a town? it was half a comfort

even to Gaveston to feel that it was there; a tower of sympathy—the visible part of joy and sorrow to all in common who lived under its shade.

At last he was under its shade, through the Close and at his own door. He forgot to look at the windows to see if the blinds were drawn.

"Bessy?"

His wife herself had opened the door.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she said gladly. "Look here!"

And there, surely enough, was Bessy in her cradle—as well, considering all things, as need be. It seemed a shame to have wasted so much emotion.

"Thank God!" said the curate. He had a heart, though not a very lively one, and it came out every now and then. "But then—if she wasn't ill, Bessy——"

"But she was ill—and she frightened me. So I sent for Doctor Adams, but he was out, and so was the assistant, and I couldn't send for Mr. Black all at once—and so—I didn't know what might happen——"

"Well?"

"And I sent for mamma too—and I'm glad I did, for she's seen me like that dozens of times, she says, and she put baby to rights in no time. Another time I shall know what to do," she said proudly; and I am not sure that she would be altogether sorry if it did happen again, that she might set it to rights, as her mother had done before her. Mothers are a peculiar people.

"And you're sure she is all right—sure?"

"There wasn't time to call back the fly—it had gone. But oh, I am so sorry I've brought you back from Hinchford; but I couldn't help it, when baby might have died. Have you dined, dear?"

"No," said the curate. He could not help feeling a little vexed; and no wonder. To have swallowed his pride and not his dinner was certainly more than a little hard.

"I'll send for some chops. I'll never do it again. But baby, you see——"

"Never mind, dear," said Gaveston, resuming his severely mild dignity of demeanour. "It is vexing, but never mind. After all, it's perhaps what I deserve, for going to Hinchford. Yes—chops will do very well, Bessy."

They had to do very well; for marketing in Deepweald after sunset was unknown, except on Saturdays.

"I am so sorry," said Bessy over again. "But you see, baby—— Tell me, dear; you've seen the countess, and the earl?"

"I've not seen Lord Quorne. But I had a long talk with Cousin Alicia in the white drawing-room."

"Oh, that is charming! Tell me about her, please! Was she glad to see you? Do you think there's any chance of baby's being Alicia—a lovely name; Alicia Gaveston—quite aristocratic? And how was she dressed?"

"She was dressed—let me see—in black something——"

"Velvet?"

"No. It was more like lace than velvet. It was lace, I suppose. And she wore pearls—very fine pearls."

"Yes?"

"That's all, I think. And she had a black fan."

"Black lace and pearls. She must be in mourning. No diamonds?"

"Not that I saw. I think, though, she had a diamond ring."

Bessy had indulged some visions of copying the countess at first hand; but black lace and pearls were obviously not to be thought of. "And how does she do her hair?"

"Let me see, it's golden."

"Surely not, Reginald! Why, where were your eyes? Surely it's brown. In the photographs it's always brown."

"I'm afraid, Bessy, that—in fact, I believe there is a fashion in London of making brown hair into golden. And I am the more convinced of it from the fact that Alicia's hair used to match her eyes, which were dark, very dark gray."

"And what's she like to talk to?"

"Bessy, I'm sorry to say that I'm glad you did not go to Hinchford." That she had not been invited was ignored between husband and wife by tacit convention.

"Why, dear?"

"Because Cousin Alicia may be a countess, but she's not a proper person to know. There'll be a scandal some day."

"Good gracious, Reginald!"

"She goes into the pothouse at Laxton, and drinks, and smokes, and sings in the bar-parlour. She swears—in foreign languages, it is true, but still she swears. She picks up vagabonds, whose names she doesn't know, and invites them to Hinchford. She talks about how she flirts with the servants. And she's a professed republican. I suppose she's lived in France till she's forgotten how to talk English, and doesn't know if she's on her head or her heels."

"Reginald! How dreadful! How shocking!"

"It's true. I was thinking of how to remonstrate with her when your note came."

"But perhaps you're mistaken? The ways of the aristocracy, you know——"

"You forget, Bessy, that right is right and wrong is wrong."

Poor Bessy! All her castles had come down with a run. Reginald's foot once within Hinchford, what might not follow? Anything—everything. He would be reconciled to his grand relations. Lord Quorne would give him a living. She would be invited to dine and sleep, and she would be able to talk about the Countess of Quorne as "my relative," or "my cousin by marriage," or "my little girl's god-mother," as the case might be. And now her own husband had as good as told her that Lady Quorne was not respectable! The Countess of Quorne not respectable! What then did respectability mean?

And what was she to say in Deepweald, about the great Lady Quorne?

Musing upon all these things, as she folded up her husband's best clothes, a letter fell from the breast-pocket. She took it up, it was addressed in a strange handwriting to "Bessy."

As she was Bessy, and as she knew of no other that could read, she naturally opened it, supposing it to be some message to her that her husband had forgotten to give her. It proved to contain two Bank of England notes of fifty pounds each, and a slip of paper on which was written, "For the poor of the parish of St. Anselm."

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

MESOPOTAMIA.

THERE was never but one man I really envied, and I certainly did not envy him either for his physical or mental qualities, for he was a Frenchified Englishman—a John Bull in the frogskin, so to speak—a creature given to many affectations, both of dress and address. There are few more curious sights than a square-shouldered, bullet-headed Briton in a French coat, through which his burly person threatens to burst at every moment, and topped by a French curly-brimmed hat, beneath which his rosy features loom moonlike and vast. My friend had in perfection that look—as of a stuffed mango—which is conferred upon a plump person by French clothes. Moreover, he wore

light-coloured gaiters many years before that device for increasing the apparent size of the foot became fashionable in this country, and had besides a knack of smoking cigarettes, and that habit of spending a disproportionate sum of money in gloves as compared with washerwomen's bills, which can only be acquired by a lengthened residence on the continent of Europe. He was not therefore to be envied, as it seems to me, on general grounds. The circumstance which made me look upon him as exceptionally happy was his privilege to lead a triangular existence as it were; his year being equally divided between London, Paris, and New York. He was, I believe, in some way remotely connected with "dry goods," and probably smuggled the same into New York; but this was none of my affair. He lived, during his annual visit to the island of Manhattan, at the most expensive hotel in that expensive region, and entertained his friends most sumptuously with terrapin soup, canvas-back ducks, and other delicacies peculiar to the country; at Paris he dwelt in snug bachelor apartments, fared sumptuously every day, and paid any sum necessary to secure a seat at the theatre on first nights. In London my friend belonged to a quiet club, where he dined and wine his friends hospitably enough, and led generally the life of a man whose "something in the City" seemed to depend on his presence in the Park, at Epsom, Ascot, and Goodwood, and other agreeable haunts. He maintained that the only pleasure he derived from his triangular life was that of perpetually abusing the country he happened to inhabit for the time being, and instituting disadvantageous comparisons between it and his other homes; but I thought him the most fortunate of men, envied and hated him accordingly, and covertly dropped cigar-ash on his natty gaiters when opportunity served. I am sorry now that I did so, for he died, poor fellow, shortly after Sedan, to the grief of his friends, who sincerely regretted him—and his terrapin soup and his canvas-back ducks. Moreover, I am not so certain that he was so happy after all as many of my friends in the Northern and Midland districts of this tight little island. Everlasting London and Brighton, Paris and Trouville, New York and Long Branch, require a tremendous constitution—as my poor friend found out—to cope with them; while my Midland friends can enjoy, especially at the present season, delightful

jaunts into moorland. They are keenly alive to their advantages too, both Liverpool "gentlemen," Manchester "men," and Sheffield "chaps." As early in the spring as it is lawful to wet a line they dart off to Ashopton, to Rowsley, and Darley, and other angling haunts, and, on the festival of St. Grouse, the crack of their breech-loaders may be heard on the Bradfield moors, and other great stretches of purple heather to the North of the Peak country. The journey is so short, too, for these happy Midlanders. They can almost step out of their forges and foundries, their mills and factories, on to the breezy moorland; and it is an easy matter to exchange the muddy waters of Sheaf and Irwell for the bright currents of Wye and Derwent. An hour, or at most two, will suffice to take them from the darkened sky, the smoke-laden atmosphere, the dingy streets, the roaring of the blast furnace, the clink of the forge, the sighing and moaning of great engines, and the incessant clatter of the smaller fry, to a sunset bright with a thousand wondrous hues, an air pure, bright, and invigorating, and a landscape of surpassing splendour. Down the smiling valleys rush brawling streams, beautiful, sparkling, and troutful. Above the meadows rise the hills, clad with a mantle of many tints of green, and above this again peeps out the broad purple shoulder of the moor. The sounds of Peakland differ widely from those of inner Hiltshire. In place of the wailing and shrieking, as of Titans writhing under their tremendous task, the sweet murmur of running water gently woos the ear, grimy streets are replaced by meadows fringed with ranunculus, and the clatter of the mill by the hum of bees. Half-choked and entirely worried man forgets for the moment his last disastrous contract, his blast furnaces damped down, his desperate struggle for existence. Anxious consideration of the attitude of the workmen gives way to a study of the flybook, and long consultations as to the state of the weather and the water. The Derwent may be too thick to tempt the most determined of Waltonians, while the Wye is in perfect condition, and the water promises abundant sport.

The Mesopotamia formed by the Wye and Derwent at Rowsley is famous for its inn. The "gentlemen," "men," and "chaps" previously mentioned, all know The Peacock at Rowsley, the name of the pretty village being pronounced variously in Derbyshire—a country having its own peculiarities

in this respect. For instance, Derby is pronounced Darby, except by the inhabitants of the county town, who follow the spelling closely enough to almost satisfy the troublesome people who wish to bring orthography down to the level of block-heads, instead of training them up to it. Still the sound is, perhaps, nearer to Dairby than Darby—the “r” being very distinctly enunciated. In like fashion, Rowsley is pronounced Roseley in the village itself and its immediate neighbourhood, while in the North and in the Midland counties generally it becomes Rousley. Perhaps, to enjoy The Peacock thoroughly, it is best to arrive there at night, or during a heavy downpour of rain—no rare phenomenon in Derbyshire—as the beauties of Mesopotamia are then completely hidden from the naked eye, and there is good cheer within to pass the time withal. There is, too, leisure to notice the curious old house said to have been in years gone by the dower-house to Haddon-hall, farther up the valley of the Wye towards Bakewell. Be this true or not, The Peacock, by turns farmhouse and inn, is a building of respectable antiquity, as the walls of enormous thickness testify. It would make a modern builder absolutely shed tears, to contemplate what he would call the sinful waste of material displayed in the construction of this old house. The partitions are as thick as the walls of a modern mansion, and the outer walls are some seven or eight feet through. As I open the little casement of my bedroom, I notice the tiny diamond-shaped panes and the old-fashioned fastening, and look on to the dark night, through which the pelting rain makes itself heard distinctly enough. This is not a cheering sound to the angler’s ear. Swollen streams, thick and turbid, are ill-adapted to the exercise of his art, and I should go sorrowfully to bed had I not been placed beyond the reach of care by the discussion of a certain shoulder of venison, followed by a Bakewell pudding, a local delicacy, something between a maid-of-honour and a jam-tart. Shoulder of venison in the southern part of this island is not understood, and is therefore contemned as an inferior part, and relegated to the making of soups, pasties, and the like. It is otherwise in Derbyshire, or, at least, at The Peacock, and it should be so, for do not those lovers of venison—other people’s, by-the-way—Robin Hood and Little John, lie buried just over the hills in Hathersage churchyard?

I confess that, when I was told I could have venison for dinner, I expected a neck at least, and was just a little dashed, when I heard that it was only a shoulder. I am far too polite a man to hint any disappointment to Mrs. Cooper, the skilful and courteous yet stately hostess, and therefore posed myself as a martyr, imagining that a tough and skinny joint was about to be my portion. To my astonishment, the dreaded shoulder appeared stewed whole, in a sauce which passeth description. After working my wicked will upon it, I was fain to seek Mrs. Cooper, and ask her how this feat of converting the shoulder of a buck into delicious meat, and unapproachable sauce, was achieved. She was kind enough to tell me that the shoulder in question was stewed until tender in good, honest stock, with onions, spices, and savoury pot-herbs; that the shoulder and the herbs being taken out of the stew-pan, the gravy was thickened with a little butter rolled in flour, flavoured with port-wine and currant jelly, strained, skimmed, and poured over the joint, which was then ready to be served up. I should like to suggest this treatment to my own cook, but to tell the truth, I am afraid to introduce a shoulder of venison to the notice of that dignified female, whose idea of the quantity of meat required to make stock is of the most capacious kind. Like Mr. Timmins’s mother-in-law, I take leave to think that a shoulder of venison stewed in the stock made from a leg of beef, a leg of veal, and a ham, would be an expensive dish; and I therefore forbear the experiment myself, and, with large-hearted philanthropy, present the recipe to those readers of *ALL THE YEAR ROUND* whose cooks may chance to be more tractable than mine.

The Peacock venison has inclined me to look cheerily upon the future, and I therefore, shutting my ears to the pattering of the rain, drop off into a sweet slumber, and dream that Robin Hood, Little John, Friar Tuck, and myself, are about to dine in Hathersage churchyard, that Bess of Hardwick is cooking the dinner, and that we are all going to Doncaster afterwards to see the Leger, on which my friends have an excellent book, according to the showing of the worthy friar—who, being the only member of the confederacy who can write, is entrusted with the clerical part of the business.

Morning brings other weather and other thoughts. Through the little casement

pours a stream of bright pure air, with the genuine mountain sparkle in it. The sky is of a clear unclouded blue, the hill-sides of the most brilliant green. In the trim garden of The Peacock walk a couple of persons, concerning whom the most unpractised eye can make no mistake. I thank heaven for the fine day, that I may get abroad and revel in the air and sunshine, for to be shut up through the long hours of a drenching day in a country inn infested with "young lovers, newly wed," is a doom too frightful to contemplate. Having acquired, during a lengthened residence in the United States, what are called in that great country "habits of observation," I read the names on their trunks as I was smoking a cigar in the hall of The Peacock last night, and am aware that the mawkish creatures walking about the garden are no other than Mr. and Mrs. Pelham Cholmondeley Thwytle, of Sheffield. When and how, I should like to know, did the names of Pelham and Cholmondeley become grafted, or rather fitted as a handle to the good, old, plebeian Thwytle? And how long will this Sheffield blade retain the fine temper, thanks to which his arm winds round the substantial form of Mrs. Pelham Cholmondeley Thwytle? They ought not to quarrel, these people, for they are evidently well supplied with the world's goods, and have youth to enjoy the same; but, alack! so had Percy FitzTudor and his wife, and good looks into the bargain. I mind me well of that handsome couple, when they came on to Brussels, and of their pretty little ways towards each other. How popular they were, too, at Homburg, and what nice little dinners they gave during the season at their little doll's house in Mayfair! It was only one season they enjoyed in this pleasant fashion, for the shattering of the household gods came the week before Goodwood. Percy, poor fellow!—though old Lady Barbican says he ought to have looked after his giddy young wife—is yet the object of much sympathy. They tell me, though very quietly, of course, that he has found consolation; and the redness of his nose lends colour to the report. As for his wife, she has vanished—gone for ever into the shadowy borderland which encircles the known world. But what have the FitzTudors to do with the Thwytles, and what concern have either with my day's fishing and strolling in pleasant Mesopotamia? The Derwent, which I have permission to fish down to Matlock, is, I hear, thick, of course; while the Wye is nearly

clear enough for angling purposes. I satisfy myself of this by a stroll down the meadow to the spot where the two rivers meet; the Derwent comparatively slow and dignified, and the Wye, noisy, hurried, irrepressible. Although far less in volume than the Derwent, it dashes at that quieter stream, and thrusts it aside for the moment; just as little, fussy obtrusive creatures of human kind override their betters, who, rather than argue the point, let them have their way for a time. The Derwent stands aside for awhile, reduced by the violence of its junior partner to a mere backwater, but is not very long before it quietly asserts the power of capital, and the little demonstrative Wye becomes lost in the greater individuality of the Derwent, as the latter serves at last as a humble tributary of the Trent. "There is not in the whole world a valley so sweet," sang Moore, of the vale of Avoca; and it must be conceded to that most harmonious of poets that the "meeting of the waters" often affords an interesting scene. That of the Thames and Medway is worth seeing: the rivers run side by side for a long way in the most majestic manner, as if unwilling to compromise their dignity by any concession until sufficiently far from the shore to be safe from observation, when they are reconciled by their common friend the sea, and forgather happily. Far less simple is the junction of the Rhone and Arve, below Geneva. The "blue rushing" of the "arrowy" river avails no more against the muddy, glacier-fed stream than the swift charge of Rupert's Whitehall gallants, ringleted, perfumed, and beplumed, against the sullen rage of the Puritan battalions. With tremendous speed and dash the azure torrent comes on, but is thrust aside by the dark-hued flood, which will make no concessions. Side by side they flow, a double river, clear as sapphire on the one bank, dark as Phlegethon on the other; the line between them being as sharply drawn as by a pencil. Onward they pass, blue-blooded aristocrat and travel-stained proletarian, yielding nothing, gaining nothing, till—their initial force spent—they mingle at last and roll onward past industrious and turbulent Lyons, dreamy Avignon, and bustling Marseilles to the sea.

It is also pleasant, while the aroma of Berncastler Muscateller still clings to the palate, to watch from the old Mosel bridge at Coblenz the quiet, simple, kindly way in which the Mosel makes acquaintance with

the Rhine. There is no obtrusiveness on the one side, no sullen attempt at repudiation on the other. Perhaps this arises from their being no question of rank and precedence involved in the union between Rhine and Mosel—the glory of the Rhine is so completely incontestable. Without counting Siegfried and Hagben, Brynhild and Chriemhild, and the Nibelung treasure they fought and quarrelled about, or poor damp Löreley, the Rhine is par excellence the river of story, and the river of power and beauty as well. The Rhine bears about the same relation to the Mosel that Pitt did to Addington, or London does to Paddington; or, to be more intelligible, that Johannisberger (Schloss) bears to Zeltinger; there is, therefore, no attempt on the part of the pretty little Mosel, who has seen really nothing of the world beyond Metz and Trèves, to rub shoulders independently with Rhine. It drops in as a humble vassal as it were, and doffs its light blue cap as it pours its contribution at the feet of its suzerain. It is otherwise when one free and enlightened river meets another in the great Far West. When Mississippi—the Father of Waters, as it is absurdly called—meets Missouri, there is a struggle for supremacy, and each river has its army of sympathisers. The Mississippites take their stand on antiquity, on the foolish Indian name which confounds the son with the father, on maps and on newspapers; while the Missourites appeal to the facts of physical geography, to the greater length of the Missouri previous to its confluence with its fraudulent partner, to the far greater length and importance of its tributaries, and to the greater specific gravity of its current, charged with material carried away from overhanging banks. It is as “close a thing” between the two great rivers as between rival candidates for the presidency.

Far less important is the debate between Derwent and Wye in the meadow lying beyond Mrs. Barker’s pretty garden, and forming the extreme point of Mesopotamia. I am not aware that the inhabitants of Rowsley, Edensor, and Bakewell have ever come to serious disagreement as to the merits of the rivers which flow past their respective villages; and if they have, I am not interested in the quarrel. As I pause opposite the tongue of land which divides the rival streams, I am knee-deep in long grass and yellow ranunculus, my hat is full of mushrooms, and such mind as is available at early morning is bent on

breakfast—the early meal of Izaak Walton, “mostly a pipe,” being altogether too unsubstantial for a stomach constructed for the reception of buckwheat cakes, ham and eggs, and rolls saturated in butter, with other light and digestible articles of diet. I care just now very little for the respective length and merits of Derwent and Wye, and steer straight for The Peacock. “Old Sol,” as sporting writers of the last generation familiarly called him, has a knack of paying flying visits to Derbyshire. Like the lady’s feet in Sir John Suckling’s song, the luminary peeps in and out as it were, and is just now seriously overshadowed. As the newspapers do not arrive at Rowsley till long after breakfast, I am spared the misery of knowing that Erie is higher and Turks lower, and fall like a tiger upon the excellent food set before me. The clouds are favourable, and I determine to fish up the Wye to the Lathkill. A gentle breeze just ruffles the water, and I set out in the society of an elderly clergyman, a regular client of The Peacock, who knows every inch of the water. Perhaps at other times I should not care for the companionship of the Rev. Mr. Robeson, as we might fall into an altercation concerning orientation, genuflexion, the baldacchino, the birreta, and the rest of it; but he is a delightful companion by the riverside. When we were undergrads together, our modes of life varied greatly. I kept a bull-terrier, he a Persian cat; I rowed, while he smoked cigarettes; I read Bell’s Life, while he studied the French poets. Yet we liked each other—I can speak for one at least—very sincerely, and I was heartily glad to meet him in Mesopotamia. He is an energetic fisherman, and a skilful. He is said to be able to throw a fly at the end of thirty yards of gut into a teacup; but as I have not seen him perform this exploit, I am prepared to declare, attest, solemnly swear, nay, to bet my own money and stake the same, that he cannot do it—no, not in half-a-dozen attempts. But he is a clever angler for all that, and if any fly can coax the hesitating fish, it is his. He does not, after the fashion of fly-fishers generally, get his tackle into difficulties with the trees and shrubs, and—confound him!—he has landed three plump pound-and-a-half trout before I have had a rise. The rain now comes on sweetly, and for a short while the “speckled beauties” fall victims to our skill or luck; for there must be luck, or

why should Robeson, whose sermons are a mere farrago of sophism and verbiage, kill a brace of trout to my one? As the rain thickens, Robeson suggests that, as we are under the shadow of Haddon Hall, we may as well go in out of the rain, and we accordingly make for the little wicket-gate in the old portal. As the appearance of this famous old mansion of the transition period between the fortified dwelling and the country house has been painted, and written about, and photographed, till it is at least as well known as the Tower of London, I will spare the readers of *ALL THE YEAR ROUND* a fine piece of descriptive writing, and many veracious particulars concerning the court kept here by the king of the Peak, that Sir George Vernon, whose daughter, Dorothy, ran away with John Manners, son of the Earl of Rutland. The most interesting part of the old house to me is the doorway, known as Dorothy Vernon's door, which leads by a flight of steps to the terrace-grounds, and the avenue of trees known as Dorothy Vernon's Walk; but my friend Robeson is worrying himself over the tapestry—ghostly old stuff—and muddling his brains over the innumerable carved boars'-heads and peacocks, the crests of the families of Vernon and Manners. To antiquarian persons the great merit of Haddon Hall is that it has not been inhabited—save by housekeepers, and such small deer—for two hundred years, and that, therefore, the house remains as it was, undefaced by modern improvements. It has been uninhabited, and I know an English freeholder, with a vote for the county, who could not be hired for money paid in advance to sleep for one night in its tapestried chambers. The method of execution of the worthy ladies who sat Penelope-wise at the head of their handmaidens, and directed the thousand and one stitches by which the effect was to be produced, is beyond all praise. But the designer—what manner of man was he? Probably of near kindred to the limner whose pleasant and appetising picture of Tomyris hangs over the fireplace in the long gallery. The Scythian Queen is represented with the head of Cyrus, and about to give it that ghastly draught which supplies the painter with a fine patch of colour.

Taking Haddon on the whole I prefer it by daylight, although I could well spare the crowd of tourist folk who follow the weary guardian to and fro. These visitors hail from all parts of the Midlands and the

North, and comport themselves with varying degrees of roughness. They canter up and down the big gallery; they intrude in most unmannerly fashion upon young artists busied in sketching bits of the old house; they stamp on the floors, and play at hide-and-seek through the rooms. Worse than this, they understand nothing of what they see. They are innocent of guide-books and maps, these good people, and care infinitely more for a bit of horse-play in the meadows by the Wye than for legends more or less truthful of Peveril of the Peak.

Mr. Robeson and I have a wet walk back from Haddon to The Peacock. It is astonishing how pouring rain and a light fishing-basket lengthen a journey. There is, however, one comfort. Wet we may be, and tired, and disgusted with shy trout, and the not over-shy tourists, whose talk is of Chatsworth, the great "show place" of the county, but by no means so interesting as Haddon, or that Hardwick which gave its name to the celebrated Bess. Chatsworth, when all the grandes eaux are playing, when cascade on cascade streams down the hill-side from the immense reservoir up on the moor, is splendid enough as a palazzo of the modern time, adorned with carvings by Gibbons, and painted ceilings, whereon "sprawl the saints of Verrio and Laguerre." But the visitors—the forty thousand and odd who are allowed to ramble over the place yearly. With the same "foolish face of praise" they stare at vases, and tables of malachite and porphyry, priceless drawings, and comparatively valueless pictures of royal, noble, and distinguished personages. It gives me a Timonic twinge as I see them, after an unappreciative stare round a room filled with pictorial gems, pull up with many an "Eh-h-h lass!" and so forth, before Sir Joshua's picture of the Duchess of Devonshire with her baby. But possibly I am ungenerous in consequence of the coyness of the trout, and must be content to "bide a wee" before the real art treasures of Chatsworth will be appreciated as they deserve.

Over the moors to Chesterfield, and thence to Hardwick Hall, is a glorious drive through mixed moorland and sweet pastoral country, only here and there defaced by the ugly chimneys which mark the up-cast of a colliery. The ancient house, built, like the Chatsworth which preceded the present palazzo, by the famous Bess of Hardwick, is, beyond all comparison, the

finest Elizabethan mansion I have seen; and with its enormous windows makes me wonder how our ancestors lived in the fearful draughts which all their wealth of tapestry could hardly keep out; and more especially, how the excellent Mr. Hobbes, who lies buried in the church of Hault Huchnall hard by, enjoyed his tobacco in the too airy apartments. Hobbes had a much better time of it, however, than the poor little excommunicated Jew Spinoza, from whom he "adapted" the majority of his ideas, like a keen-witted private tutor as he was. My friend Robeson does not love Hobbes or Spinoza either, and my remarks concerning them as we trudge through the wet meadows from Haddon irritate him not a little. He complains, in the fretful tone of a disappointed man, that he does not mind missing a day's sport, but that I have no right, having caught an unfortunate clergyman in the country, to make his life a misery, by experimenting upon him, as in corpore vili, the effect of my forthcoming article in the Transcendental Review. Poor Robeson! it is cruel I know, but such a chance may never occur again. Nevertheless, I change the subject, and hold forth on the badness of the school attendance in the neighbourhood, but with no better success. Finally, I come to the conclusion that my friend is suffering from the sulkiness brought on by hunger, and leave him in peace, while the trout we have captured, and a brace of plump, well-conditioned grouse, are being cooked to a turn for our dinner. This important event over, I become passive, and listen, with the patience of the Chaldee patriarch, to an eloquent and lengthy exposition of the present condition and future prospects of the Established Church, while the rain comes down like an avalanche on the solid roof of The Peacock at Rowsley.

UNDER THE DREAM-TREE.

In a trackless garden a tree is growing
Of strangest flower, of sweetest fruit.
Ah! how declare to the dull world's knowing
What dreams are dreamed by that rare tree's root?
Or what the burthen of that wild lute,
By hidden fingers flutily played,
Whose music maketh the night-bird mute,
Under the dream-tree's tender shade?
The tranced breeze o'er that garden blowing
Lingers by it on airy foot;
So rich the scent of those clusters glowing,
So rare the sound of that hidden lute.
Pains or perils shall none compute,
Which bar the paths to that secret glade,
In view of joys that the heart salute
Under the dream-tree's tender shade.

Silver floods are flowing, flowing,
Ripple on ripple in gay pursuit
Of soft shed rose-leaves slowly snowing
From bending branches of slender shoot.
Though visions throng by that rare tree's root,
Joy, unfettered and unafraid,
Wakes at call of that hidden lute,
Under the dream-tree's tender shade.

Love, why lingerest? Still that late
Woos thy feet to the rose-walled glade.
Come! ere the mystic music's mute,
Under the dream-tree's tender shade.

UNLIMITED LOU'.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

SHE was not very young. In her moments of confidence, and they were many, she would credit herself, I believe, with "eight-and-twenty summers." The parish register would perhaps have debited her with a dozen or so more. She was not very lovely. Her mouth was just a little too large, her eyes just a trifle too small, her lips just a morsel too thick, her hair just a shade too thin, her forehead just a line or so too narrow, her nose just a hairsbreadth too wide, her hands just a thought too red and bony, her cheeks just a suggestion too yellow and plump—for ideal beauty even of the least classical type. But she was emphatically what might be called—in courtesy at all events—a fine woman. The popular opinion that she stood seven feet in her stockings, must, I think, have been an exaggeration. Rumour, however—based in this instance upon the statement of an indiscreet friend who had persuaded her to entrust herself for a few moments to a railway weighing-machine—was no doubt correct in assigning her a weight of something over sixteen stone. She signed herself, in a little German-looking hand, Louisa Abbott. We called her "Unlimited Lou'."

We, that is, of Kleine-Fussbad, where Louisa, severely virtuous in her condemnation of the sin of gambling and of all who indulge therein, had now for some few years been doing her best to bring the local administration to a sense of their iniquity, by a wholly gratuitous participation in the numerous advantages held out by it, at a heavy annual outlay, to attract the votaries of the trente-et-quarante. "If everybody," she would say, with calm superiority, when mildly chaffed upon the choice of a residence, "would do as I do, and make use of these people's gardens, and balls, and concerts, and all the rest of it, without throwing away their money

upon the tables, all this wickedness would soon come to an end." Which was no doubt very true. Meanwhile, however, the majority of the visitors to Kleine-Fussbad paid their tribute readily enough, and the wicked administration still found it remunerative to invest a considerable percentage of the profits of their wickedness in making things pleasant for their victims. It must be owned that this sort of participation in the profits of wickedness, without any share in the wickedness itself, made life in Kleine-Fussbad, after Louisa's pattern, not only virtuous, but economical, and even pleasant.

Previously to her settlement in her present quarters, Unlimited Lou' had been living at Grosse-Fussbad, about a dozen miles off. Grosse-Fussbad was one of the big watering and gambling places, perhaps the biggest of all, and looked down with lordly contempt upon its smaller and less prosperous neighbour. I shall never forget the superior air with which the presiding employé, who evidently recognised me as a denizen of the rival establishment, knocked my poor little stake off the roulette, the first time I drove over from Kleine-Fussbad for a day's outing. I had been playing a small half-florin progression of my own invention, on the single numbers, with very happy results at the latter place, and, as the course of the game seemed favourable, thought I might as well have a try for the day's expenses. For the first few coups the stakes stood at the regulation minimum of one florin, and were duly raked into the bank without remark. But by-and-by they rose to a florin and a half, and then the great brass-edged rake came swiftly down upon the offending coin, and with a click and a "*Ça ne va pas*," sent it flying almost into my lap. I remonstrated mildly that I had been allowed to play such stakes at Kleine-Fussbad. "Possible, monsieur—*les dimanches*," was the haughty reply; "but for the moment it is Tuesday—and we are not at Kleine-Fussbad." *Les dimanches!* There was the rub. Grosse-Fussbad was in Prussia, and the Kleine was not. And virtuous Prussia, allowing even then no gambling on Sundays—except, of course, in her own State lotteries—felt naturally a virtuous indignation at the thought of the numbers of her own week-day votaries, who flocked on that day to her impertinent and ungodly little rival just across the frontier.

Notwithstanding, however, the drawback of this enforced Sunday-closing movement, Grosse-Fussbad, with its huge kursaal, its strident band, and its gas-lighted Cremorne of a garden, drew to itself by far the larger portion of visitors; so large a proportion indeed that the administration of Kleine-Fussbad had some ado to keep their more modest establishment afloat at all. Whence it came that, in the four or five months of the season, rents in the bigger town were two or three times as high as those of its smaller rival, while the tradesmen of the latter, instead of the thousand-per-cent. profits of their more fashionable neighbours, were compelled to content themselves with a modest hundred or two. Of course, however, this fact had nothing to do with the migration of Unlimited Lou'. She, as we all know, changed her quarters solely on account of the slight access of rheumatism which she had contracted when spending some weeks with her dear friend the Viscountess Webbefute, at her ladyship's ancestral home among the Lincolnshire fens, and for which the private physician of her other dear friend, the Countess of Chalkston, had particularly recommended the baths of Kleine-Fussbad.

Farther back than Grosse-Fussbad and that ancestral mansion in the Lincolnshire fens, Miss Abbott had not as yet been traced. Opinion, indeed, was somewhat divided at Kleine-Fussbad on the subject of her origin and precise social status. Mrs. Brown of Manchester, Mrs. Torrington Jones of Cheapside and Tavistock-place, and Lady Robinson, the wealthy and highly-respected relict of the late Lord Mayor, were all convinced of her being a lady of the highest and most unexceptionable family. Indeed, Lady Robinson, who had herself moved (for twelve months) in some of the very 'ighest circles, was almost certain she had 'ad the honour of meeting Miss A. before, though whether it was at Court or at the 'ouses of one or other of the nobility, Lady Robinson could 'ardly venture to say. The Glanvilles, on the other hand, had no doubt she was a very excellent person, but smiled a little at the mention of her aristocratic pretensions, whilst little Tom Chatfield, of the F. O., who knows everybody, laughed them to scorn. "Know Lou' Abbott, my dear fellow? Unlimited Lou'? Should think I did. Knows me too."

But for once little Tom Chatfield seemed to be wrong. The words were hardly out of his mouth before Louisa herself came sweeping by, and a look of more absolute non-recognition, than that with which she encountered his somewhat exaggerated profound salutation, it would be difficult to imagine.

"He! he! he!" sniggered Tom, when chaffed upon the subject of this very evident cut direct. "She won't turn up again while I'm here." And then Tom told us the story of his previous acquaintance with Unlimited Lou'.

"It was at Scarborough," he said, "when I was there three years ago with my aunt, Lady Oldeastle. Horrid, vulgar place, you know. But the old lady's got a pet doctor there, and goes every year. Well, the very first day at dinner who should turn up alongside of us but Unlimited Lou'. The old lady's a pretty fair hand at putting people into their places; but, by Jove! Lou' was too many for her. Regular pachyderm, you know; hide like a rhinoceros. We complained of a draft from the window, and changed our places; but the next day there was Lou' at our elbow again. This time we found we were too near the door, and though the proprietor clearly thought us very troublesome people, he obliged us once more, and put us right away at the farther end of the table, half-a-mile from door or window either. Awfully hot it was, and my poor aunt, who isn't thin, you know, had to keep her fan going like a windmill. But we flattered ourselves we had got rid of Unlimited Lou'."

"And had you?"

"By Jove, sir! not a bit of it. Next night there she was again, affectionate as ever. Thought the old lady would have had a fit. She was within an ace of leaving the table and going straight off to town by the night mail, when, just at the moment, I caught the head-waiter's eye. The scoundrel was grinning, sir, absolutely grinning. As soon as dinner was over I had a brief private interview with that head-waiter, and next evening Lou's chair was occupied, and her place marked, quite at the other end of the table."

"And did she spot you?"

"Well, yes, I think she did. At least I happened after dinner to be passing the open window of the head-waiter's private den, and I heard Lou's voice—rather loud. Bad form, you know, listening, but it was really much too awfully tempting."

"'Didn't I give you half-a-crown,' she was saying, 'to put me next my particular friend the marchioness?'"

"'Very sorry, I'm sure, miss,' says he, and I could almost hear the beggar grin; 'but, you see——'"

"'Well?'"

"'You see, miss, the marchioness, she sent me a suvvin to put you somewhere else.'"

On the whole, this, the only bit of positive evidence we had been able to obtain, rather told against poor Lou's pretensions. Some people, too, were cruel enough to say that while the matter of her conversation was always concerned with what she was pleased to term the ancestral halls of the aristocracy, its manner perhaps rather of the two favoured their servants' halls. It was a great day in poor Lou's calendar when those two dear old bodies, the Ladies Harriet and Anne Mackenzie, who would give away the very clothes off their good-natured backs if it weren't for the look of the thing, actually accepted her invitation to tea, and came clambering up her five steep flights of stairs, with the thermometer at ninety in the shade. But her triumph was short-lived. Lady Harriet and her sister did not cut her—I don't believe that anything short of proof of some act of cruelty to a child or a dumb animal could induce those dear old birds to cut anyone—but they fled from Kleine-Fussbad by the eight-o'clock train next morning, and never came back again.

"My dear," said Lady Anne to my wife, in a moment of special confidence some months afterwards, "I have never whispered a word of this to anyone but yourself, and I wouldn't have it get about for the world, but that dreadful woman—poor thing! I'm sure I'm very sorry for her, and so is Harriet—she was keeping the tea hot for us by wrapping up the teapot in her own flannel——" And here the good old lady suddenly broke off, just lifted a tiny fold of her well-preserved old black satin gown—she meant to have bought a new one this year, only poor Charlie Shiftless's children did really want some fresh frocks—nodded, frowned, plied her big green fan vigorously for a moment or two, and changed the subject.

One thing, however, is tolerably certain. Whether Lou' has been, as she asserts, a welcome guest in those ancestral halls of which she has so many fond reminiscences, or whether she ranged them only in a stipen-

diary capacity, and was duly pensioned off when her services were no longer required—or no longer endurable—she has at all events managed to carry with her into her present retirement a considerable show of relics of those halcyon days, some of them by no means without their value.

Lou' lives, as has been said, up five flights of very dirty stairs, performs her cooking operations, when alone, in her tiny sitting-room—when entertaining company, in the tinier bedroom beyond, whose window opens into the six-feet-square ventilating shaft, ingeniously designed for the accommodation of such minor casements as must otherwise have marred the symmetry of either the front or the rear façade. The window of the sitting-room, which is not luxuriously furnished, lacks a blind; and rather than go to the expense of the few krentzers that would procure one, she pins up in its place a mighty garment—necessary but nameless—not delicate in texture, but very much of that peculiar tint which appears now so fashionable for blind purposes, and which fills a room with a sort of murky glare, as though the sun were shining through the bottom of a brass coal-scuttle. There are, in truth, but very few shifts to which Lou' will not have to resort for the economising of an extra pfenning. When she lived at Grosse-Fussbad it was a very favourite operation of hers to arrange with three or four acquaintances, not versed in the customs of the place, for a drive to Kleine-Fussbad at joint charges. Now the spirited administration of Kleine-Fussbad, which knew well that very few of the golden geese of holiday society fluttered, even for a day, around its tempting tables without leaving behind some of their feathers, was always willing to pay half the cost of such a journey. Lou', who of course was always kind enough to take the trouble of pecuniary arrangements off the hands of her inexperienced friends, used, in a full season, to make a very fair little weekly income in this way.

But it is only due to her to say that all this was matter of choice, not of necessity. Taking all things into consideration—and there was one point in respect of which, when expenditure had to be incurred, it was not stinted; even when she dined at home Lou' never starved herself—she must, I should imagine, have spent considerably under a hundred a year. I take it there were very few years in which she did not “put by” at least that amount.

Nor was it money only that Lou' had brought away with her into retirement. The famous teapot, which had been kept warm for poor Lady Anne, was of solid silver, beautifully chased, and duly matched by cream-jug and sugar-basin. The quails, and pigeons, and other succulent morsels, so delicately stewed in the grimy tin “Etna” in the frowsy bedroom that opened into the ventilating-shaft, made their appearance in the sitting-room under the rich silver cover of a gorgeous muffin-dish. Her fork—I believe she had only one, which was duly wiped at each change of dish on a piece of bread—was of Britannia metal, or whatever yet dingier substitute for that horrible composition is current in Germany; but her teaspoons—and she had five of them—were of real king's-pattern, weighing Heaven knows how many ounces each. Various pieces of really valuable china, too, had Lou', and a very fair collection of small articles of jewellery. But the gem of the whole, the pride and joy of Unlimited Lou's rather limited heart, was “her pearls.”

I am bound to confess that pearls were not becoming to Lou'. When she came out—as on state occasions, such as the free balls at the Kursaal, she would come out—en grande tenue, in a gushing “froek” of white muslin, with a coronet of pearls upon the thin, closely-plastered hair, a pair of pearl earrings hanging from the big ears on either side of the broad flat face, a triple string of pearls around each red wrist, and one magnificent row supporting a delicate cross upon that bony neck, it must be owned that a less pleasant object it would not be easy to imagine. But the pearls themselves were beyond reproach, and if not actually beyond price also, were unquestionably of very great value.

Poor Lou'! Will she ever forget that memorable occasion on which she last appeared in all the glory of “her pearls?”

It was not often that our administration at Kleine-Fussbad went the length of giving a ball. It was an expensive form of entertainment enough—costing, in point of fact, nothing but the extra gas in the ball-room; but there were other than economical objections in the way. In a large place like Grosse-Fussbad, and among the thousand or two of visitors to be found there on any day of the season, there will always be a considerable number who are really of no value to the administration, except for the players

who follow in their train. That is the class for whom the balls are intended, and Grosse-Fussbad gave one every week. With its small rival, a ball meant providing a couple of hours' employment for people who might else be dropping, perchance, a stray florin or two, in sheer despair of finding anything else to do. So our administration was not given to that form of entertainment.

It so happened, however, that there had been at Grosse-Fussbad an extraordinary run of luck in favour of the tables. For the last three weeks nobody had won anything, and as it was a recognised institution for the losers at the one establishment to endeavour to recoup their losses at the other, there soon set in a marked exodus in the direction of Kleine-Fussbad. This was, of course, a movement to be encouraged, and the administration gave a grand ball for its encouragement accordingly.

Lou' was in her glory. Not only were "her pearls" displayed in all their splendour; not only had she, after some deliberation, gone to the expense of having the famous white muslin frock washed and got up by the best laundress of the place, and inked the worn edges of her big kid dancing-pumps till they really looked almost as good as new. All these preparations she had been known to make before, even to the purchase of a couple of yards of broad blue ribbon to belt in her delicate waist. But this time Lou's sacrifice on the altar of Beauty had gone even farther than this. Whether the addition was a simple concession to the demands of fleeting fashion, or whether any whisper had reached her ears unfavourable to the contrast between those elegant bracelets and the red, creased wrists they encircled, I cannot say, but this time the three rows of pearls were clasped round a pair of twelve-buttoned gloves. Where these Broddingnagian adornments could have been picked up is a mystery to this day. Rumour had it that they were one of a half-dozen manufactured expressly for a Frankfort house on behalf of the Baroness Silberschmidt—popularly supposed to weigh over twenty stone—and returned by that lady as too big in the thumbs. However that may be, they accommodated themselves to Lou's thumbs perfectly; and though they cracked a little across the back of the hand, and two or three of the lower buttons had to be removed and replaced on a tiny bit of tape half an inch

or so beyond the edge, the general effect was admirable.

Was it a sense of this unwonted gorgeousness of array which made the little heart flutter so wildly within that mighty bosom? Or was there some unconscious, instinctive sense of a coming crisis, some blind presentiment of the pangs by which that tender, and not unpractised organ, was so soon again to be thrilled? Poor little heart! With how many an altogether unrequited passion had it ached and thumped in all those fort—I beg pardon—all those eight-and-twenty years! To any call, not of course of mere foolish "charity," but of real, romantic, gushing "sentiment," how open it was still!

It was unfortunate for Lou' that emotions such as these were not favourable in their effect upon her personal appearance. There are soft white skins and damask cheeks on which the delicate rose-tint comes and goes, leaving them with each change only lovelier than before. Probably, nature had none such in stock big enough to endow poor Unlimited Lou' withal. That saucy young scapegrace, little Jack Mordant, who ought to have been whipped and sent back to Eton, instead of being allowed to corrupt his morals and forget his cricket at Kleine-Fussbad, used to say that her "sallow old hide," as he irreverently termed it, had no blood in it at all, and only blushed yellow. It was blushing its very yellowest this evening. The atmosphere, too, was close and hot, and Lou' being rather of what the doctors term a "full habit," yields all too easily to atmospheric influences. Altogether—and in spite of "her pearls"—Lou' was not, it must be owned, looking her loveliest. She stood before the great mirror over the fireplace, and as she gazed, a blank look stole over her broad, flat face. Poor Lou' herself was beginning to doubt.

There is in the world no such true and faithful friend as your looking-glass. It will tell you the bare, ugly truth, of course, if you wish for it. But it has a delicacy of appreciation you will find in no other friend, and will make quite sure that you do wish for it first. Until it has so made sure, it will, as a rule, repeat, without wearying, whatever flattering tale you may desire. But even this true friend fails us sometimes, and Lou's mirror was failing her now.

Still it would not be without a struggle that Lou', whose faith in her own charms had hitherto been, at the least, as unlimited

as anything about her, would abandon that faith even at the imperative bidding of her treacherous ally. There was something wrong, no doubt, with the lighting of the room. The glass itself, too, was of course in fault. All these German glasses are wretched things. Why, look at little Mrs. Mynniver, about whose white skin all the men rave so idiotically, and whose plump little bare shoulders are visible just under Lou's great red elbow. Lou' is quite certain that, in the glass, those ridiculous little shoulders are looking yellower than any guinea. Whilst as for figure—ah! there the glass cannot libel you. And Lou' draws herself up in proud consciousness of her five feet eleven inches, and turning her broad back upon the faithless mirror, confronts the gathering crowd again with renewed courage.

The room was beginning, not exactly to fill—the somewhat too ambitiously proportioned musik-saal of Kleine-Fussbad has never yet been known to do that—but to assume, at least, something of an inhabited aspect. The band was in its place, and the brief preliminary crash had already given notice that the opening quadrille was about to commence. Slowly, here and there, among the scattered crowd, little nuclei of enthusiastic dancers determined not to lose a solitary opportunity, were beginning to crystallise into lines and squares. A second crash of warning, a little more sharply accentuated than the first, had set off some twenty or thirty couples on a false start. Another minute or two, at the utmost, would see the squares completely formed, and the opening quadrille in full swing. It was an anxious moment for Unlimited Lou'. Experience had taught her that now was, beyond all question, her best, if not her only, chance. By-and-by, when the evening was a little farther advanced, and the queens and princesses of Fussbad "society" should have arrived, every man in the room would be engaged a dozen deep. But this first dance? How many a girl had Lou' seen, especially in public ball-rooms where the necessities of formal introduction were not too severe, invited, nay, even implored, to fill a gap in its ranks, who, for the rest of the evening, was doomed inevitably to a place along the wall! Lou' did long to dance just one dance.

But the invitation to fill the gap—and it would have been a terrible gap indeed that Lou' could not effectively have filled—did not come. From the vantage-ground

of her five feet eleven she could see over the heads of all the women and most men in the room, and watch the growing squares in their gradual development. There was no gap left now. The final warning had been rapped out by the conductor's stick; the real opening crash had come; the first figure was in full career. The chance was gone, and Lou's heart sank.

Suddenly it gave one mighty bound—almost into her very mouth—and stood still.

OLD FRENCH ACTORS.

BARON.

SOMEWHERE about 1630, a young tradesman of Issonden, in the province of Berry, commissioned by his father to dispose of sundry articles of merchandise at a fair held at Bourges, was so fascinated by the performances of a troop of strolling actors temporarily located there, that he volunteered to join them, and being accepted, accompanied them for several years in their country wanderings, until he felt himself sufficiently at home in his new profession to brave the ordeal of a Parisian audience. The date of his first appearance at the Hôtel de Bourgogne is not given, but it probably took place between 1636 and 1640, for it is certain that he played before Louis the Thirteenth, who died in 1642. He owed, indeed, to that monarch the appellation by which he and his descendants are popularly known, his real name being Michel Boyron, which the king having by mistake pronounced Baron, the alteration, probably as sounding more euphonious, was henceforth generally adopted both by himself and by the public. His success, especially in tragedy, was so decisive that he at once took his position as one of the leading members of the company; and shortly after married an actress of great beauty, of whom the following anecdote is related. She enjoyed in the highest degree the favour of Anne of Austria, and was frequently present at the royal toilette; whenever she was announced the Queen turned to her ladies in waiting, and simply said, "Voilà la Baron!" upon which all, even including Madame de Motteville, unwilling to appear at a disadvantage beside so attractive a visitor, vanished with one accord, and left the new-comer in possession of the field.

The career of Michel Baron, which had commenced so brilliantly, was cut short

by an untimely accident; while playing Don Diègue in Corneille's *Cid*, he struck with his foot the sword that had fallen from his hand, and received a slight wound, which he imprudently neglected until in the course of a few days mortification ensued, and he was informed that in order to save his life he must submit to amputation. This he steadily refused doing, saying that a tragedy king with a wooden leg would inevitably be hissed off the stage, and that he preferred dying. In spite of all remonstrances he persisted in his resolution, and expired October 6th, 1655, in the flower of his age.*

The reputation of the elder Baron, although by all accounts justly merited, was destined to be completely thrown into the shade by that of his son, likewise christened Michel, the *Roscins* of the French stage, who, according to the extract from the baptismal register produced by his family after his decease, was born in Paris during the month of October, 1653. This date has, however, been contested, it being generally supposed that the great actor was at least six years older than he professed to be; but as he himself was invariably reticent on the subject, and disposed to quarrel with anyone who alluded to it, the precise epoch of his birth must still remain a mystery. It is nevertheless certain that in 1666 he had already shown such natural aptitude for the dramatic profession, as to be enrolled in a company of youthful comedians whose performances at the Foire Saint Germain were at that time the talk of the town; and that Molière, attracted thither by curiosity, was at once struck by his promising qualities, and not only offered him an engagement at his theatre, but volunteered to instruct him in the principles of his art. Baron gratefully accepted the proposal, and in December of the same year appeared before Louis the Fourteenth at St. Germain as Myrtil in *Mélicerte*; Madame, or, as she was called, Mdle. Molière playing the heroine. The capricious Armande, then not on the best terms with her husband, and consequently little inclined to favour those whom she suspected of being attached to him, took an instinctive dislike to Baron,

and besides profiting by her position to subject him to frequent petty annoyances, so far forgot herself on one occasion as to box his ears in presence of the entire company. Galled by this affront, and unwilling on his patron's account openly to resent it, the young actor earnestly besought the latter to consent to a temporary cessation of his engagement, adding that he would gladly resume it as soon as, by careful study and a few years' practice on provincial boards, he had acquired that confidence in his own powers which could alone enable him to do justice to the lessons of his benefactor.

From 1667 until 1670 he led a wandering life, performing alternately in the smaller towns of Languedoc and Provence, and ultimately at Lyons and Dijon, from whence, in obedience to a summons from Molière, he hastened to rejoin his old associates, and reappeared in Paris towards the close of 1670 as Domitien in Corneille's *Tite et Bérénice*. This first attempt was comparatively a failure; Racine's tragedy on the same subject, admirably played by the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, bore away the palm, and it was not until the following year that the production of *Psyché* gave him an opportunity of displaying his rare personal advantages and the incontestable superiority of his talent. The character entrusted to him was that of L'Amour, Mdle. Molière representing *Psyché*; and if we may believe contemporary accounts, the fickle fair one was so captivated by the graceful bearing of her stage lover, that before many weeks had elapsed her former prejudice against him had given way to a more tender sentiment, which, we are led to suppose, was not unwillingly reciprocated by the gallant Cupidon.

After the death of Molière in 1673, Baron transferred his valuable services to the Hôtel de Bourgogne, and in 1680 was universally regarded as the leading actor of that theatre, to which those of the Palais Royal and the Marais had recently been united; from this period, until his first retirement in 1691, he remained exclusively in possession of the chief tragic and comic parts in the ancient répertoire, and by the force of his genius ensured the success of even such indifferent writers as Campistron and Pradon.

Physically, he had everything in his favour; he was tall and excellently proportioned, and his noble and expressive countenance, a perfect type of masculine

* Marshal Fabert was more fortunate on a similar occasion. Having been wounded by a splinter in the leg, the surgeon insisted on its being cut off; but the old soldier would not hear of it. "No," he said, "death shall have me as I am, or not at all," and ultimately recovered.

beauty, sufficed of itself to rivet the attention of the spectator; his voice was pure, liquid, and sonorous, and nothing could surpass the faultless harmony of his intonation. Contrary to the habit of his predecessors, who declaimed the verses of Corneille and Racine with unvarying monotony, pausing at the end of each line to take breath, and utterly repudiating any break in their sing-song measure, he avoided all unnecessary emphasis, spoke naturally, and heightened the effect of his delivery by judiciously disregarding the regularity of the rhythm. His gestures were simple and dignified, free from exaggeration and invariably appropriate; "even his silence," to quote a contemporary writer, "was eloquent." He possessed in a remarkable degree the invaluable quality of presence of mind, the following instance of which among many others has been recorded. One evening, the tragedy of Mithridate had been substituted at the last moment without his knowledge for that of Phèdre; Baron, entering as usual attended by his confidant, had already commenced his part of Hippolyte, when the prompter apprised him in a whisper that the piece had been changed. Far from betraying any surprise, he immediately assumed another look and tone, and to the astonishment of the public, who had anticipated some hesitation, coolly addressed his companion in the words of Zipharès, "On nous faisait, Arbate, un fidèle rapport." Racine was very partial to him, and at the rehearsal of one of his tragedies, after explaining to the other actors the manner in which he desired their characters to be played, turned to Baron, saying: "As for you, monsieur, I need give you no instructions; your own intelligence will tell you more than any words of mine could possibly do." Notwithstanding, however, the friendly feeling that existed between them, the poet was not altogether exempt from the traditional irritability of his race; and on one occasion, when the actor had ventured to speak disparagingly of a piece he had just read, he angrily retorted: "Baron, I have summoned you hither to take a part in my tragedy, not to find fault with it." As the narrator of this anecdote shrewdly adds: "If an author at the present day were to say as much, he would run a great risk of never seeing his piece played at all."

Baron's chief defect was his excessive vanity; conscious of his artistic supe-

riority, he maintained that the public were bound to consider his appearance before them as a mark of condescension on his part, and wholly declined their right to criticise his acting. While performing Agamemnon in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, he began his opening speech in so low a tone as not to be distinctly heard by those at a distance from the stage; upon which a malcontent in the pit exclaimed, "Louder!" "Were I to speak louder I should speak ill," he replied with perfect calmness, and continued in the same key as before.* "Every hundred years," he once declared in a transport of self-admiration, "one may see a Cæsar, but it requires two thousand to produce a Baron, and since Roscius I know no one equal to myself." Nay, he even objected to the wording of the royal grant of his pension, which ran thus: "My treasurer will pay Michel Boyron, called Baron, one of my comedians," etc., and was on the point of refusing to accept it; but the amount being three thousand livres, a considerable sum in those days, he thought better of it, and contented himself with declaiming against the want of respect shown him, and pocketing the money.

His coachman and running footman having been one day beaten by those of the Marquis de Biron, with whom he was on familiar terms, he complained bitterly of the affront and demanded redress, repeating incessantly the words "your servants" and "mine," until the marquis, annoyed by his importunity, abruptly closed the discussion by saying, "My good Baron, why have you servants?"

Baron was subject, off the stage, to occasional fits of absence of mind, and it is recorded that one day, when in a hurry to arrive at the theatre, he hired a sedan-chair, and finding that the bearers did not progress fast enough, got out, and taking the place of one of them, started off at a rapid pace with the empty chair behind him, and never discovered the absurdity of his position until he reached his destination.

In 1691, when at the height of his

* Apropos of this piece, a lady, not overburdened with classical knowledge, who had inherited a collection of old paintings, showing them to him one day, pointed out a particular picture, and asked him if he knew what the subject was. "Certainly, madame," said Baron, "it represents the sacrifice of *Iphigénie en Aulide*." "That is impossible," she replied, "for it has been in my family above a century, and Monsieur Racine only wrote his tragedy ten years ago."

reputation, and without any ostensible motive, he signified his intention of retiring from the stage, and, the permission of Louis the Fourteenth having been with difficulty obtained, Baron appeared for the last time October 21st, as Ladislas in Rotrou's *Venceslas*. Various reasons have been assigned for this step; by some it was attributed to the King's refusal to confer on him the title of director of the Comédie, hitherto managed by the actors themselves; and by others to his desire to liberate himself from the restrictions then imposed by the clergy on all members of the theatrical profession. Whatever may have been the real cause of his retirement, he persisted in his resolution for nearly twenty-nine years; and it was not until the annual close of the dramatic season in March, 1720, that the actor, whose duty it was to address the public on such occasions, announced for the ensuing 10th of April the reappearance of M. Baron in *Cinna*.

By this time, with the single exception of La Thorillière, all his former comrades were either dead or had left the stage. A new generation of playgoers had sprung up, to whom the name of Baron was merely a glorious tradition of the past; and few of those who had seen him in his pride of manhood yet remained to welcome their ancient favourite. His celebrity, however, had survived his prolonged absence; and such was the general curiosity to behold him that, as soon as the doors were opened, every seat in the house was occupied, the Regent Duke of Orleans, attended by a numerous train of courtiers, being present. Never, even in the palmy days of his youth, had he excited greater transports of enthusiasm than on this memorable evening. Notwithstanding his advanced age he exhibited no trace of decrepitude, but proved that the lapse of time had neither impaired his physical energy nor the impassioned fervour of his delivery. His return was a source of great profit to the receipts of the theatre, which night after night was crowded to excess. He performed successively the characters he had formerly made his own, and both in tragedy and comedy was pronounced by the best critical judges to be unrivalled. His example stimulated Adrienne Lecouvreur and Quinault Dufresne to new efforts, and prevented them from adopting the false declamatory tone, which, since his retirement, had again become the fashion. The latter artist, indeed, then a young

man, may be said to have been mainly indebted for his subsequent excellence to his careful study of so admirable a model. During the nine years constituting the second period of Baron's dramatic career, he added twelve original characters to his ordinary *répertoire*; these, however, with the exception of Voltaire's *Marianne* and Brébillon's *Pyrrhus* (no very favourable specimens, by the way, of their respective authors), were totally unworthy of his talent, and owed the ephemeral success obtained by them solely to the popularity of their interpreter.

In certain parts assumed by him the disparity between his own age and that of the personage represented bordered on the ridiculous. For instance, when La Motte produced his tragedy *Les Machabées*, the character of the youthful Misael was entrusted to Baron, then at the very least sixty-eight years old. This singular anomaly gave rise to the following epigram:

Le vieux Baron, pour l'honneur d'Israël,
Fait le rôle enfantin du jeune Misael,
Et, pour rendre la scène exacte,
Il se fait raser à chaque acte.

On another occasion, while playing Antiochus in *Rodogune*, his mother, Cleopatra, was personated by Mdlle. Balicourt, then in her teens; Mdlle. Duclos, who was past fifty, being the *Rodogune*. When in the course of the piece Cleopatra summoned them to her side and addressed them as "my children," the audience burst into a shriek of laughter, and it was with difficulty that Mdlle. Balicourt could restrain herself from following their example. In his famous scene with *Chimène* in *The Cid*, the sexagenarian Rodrigue threw himself with all the vivacity of his younger days at the lady's feet, but remained unable to move until two attendants came to his rescue, and assisted him to rise. In the same tragedy his delivery of the passage:

Je suis jeune, il est vrai, mais aux âmes bien nées
La valeur n'attend pas le nombre des années,

occasioned a general titter; upon which he repeated the lines with such imposing emphasis that the mirth of the spectators instantly subsided, and the further progress of the scene was interrupted by a shout of enthusiastic applause.

Lesage, who never misses an opportunity of criticising the actors of his time, thus maliciously describes Baron in his *Diable Boiteux*: "I perceive a player who is

asleep, enjoying the pleasure of a dream that flatters him greatly. This actor is so old that there is not a soul in Madrid who can say they saw the first of him. He has been on the stage so long that one may say he is theatrified, and has talent, but is so proud and vain of it that he imagines himself superior to the rest of mankind. Would you know what this mock hero is dreaming of? That he is dying, and sees all the deities of Olympus met together to decide what they shall do with a mortal of his importance. He hears Mercury telling the council of the gods that so celebrated a comedian, after acting the part of Jupiter and the rest of the chief divinities so often, ought not to undergo the common fate of mankind, but deserves to be received among themselves. Momus applauds Mercury's opinion; but some of the other gods and goddesses being against so new an apotheosis, Jupiter, to avoid disputes, turns the old comedian into a scene." In the eleventh chapter of the third book of *Gil Blas*, the author again introduces him under the name of Signor Alonzo Carlos de la Ventoleria. "This man has been an actor; he left the stage out of caprice, and afterwards repented having done so. Did you remark his jet black locks? They are dyed, as are his eyebrows and mustachios; he is older than Saturn, but as his parents neglected at his birth to inscribe his name on the parish register, he takes advantage of this omission to pass for younger than he is by at least twenty years."

The satirical Collé, in accordance with his usual habit of praising the dead at the expense of the living, speaks highly of Baron. "When I saw him, he was seventy-two years old, and at so advanced an age he might well be excused, if his acting were less impassioned than it had probably been in his youth. He atoned for this deficiency by displaying a rare intelligence, and a majesty of deportment which I have never seen equalled; in tragedy he was natural without familiarity, and his comedy was so life-like that the spectator lost sight of the actor in the personage represented by him. When he played a king or an emperor, his entrance on the stage was invariably preceded by a procession of supernumeraries, attired as guards; and I remember that once, when performing the High-priest in *Athalie*, the attendant Levites not being at hand at a particular moment, he exclaimed im-

patiently, and loud enough to be heard by those near him: '*Pas un Lévite, mordieu! pas un seul animal de Lévite!*'" In a word, he adored his profession, and perhaps on that very account excelled in it.

In his leisure hours, Baron frequently tried his hand at dramatic composition, and contributed ten comedies to the literature of his day; some of these were ascribed at the time to the Père Delarue and other writers; but as no real Simon Pure ever openly came forward to dispute his right of paternity, it may be safely left unquestioned. The best are *L'Homme à Bonnes Fortunes*, *La Coquette*, *L'Andrienne*—in all of which he sustained the principal character—and *Les Adelphe*s. With reference to the latter, the following anecdote has been handed down to us. Some days before its production at the theatre, the witty and eccentric Duc de Roquelaure engaged the author to dine at his hotel in company with three ladies of rank, and to bring his manuscript with him. "You shall read it to us," he said; "for I am curious to see which is the least tiresome, Terence or you." Baron accepted the invitation, and at the appointed hour found himself surrounded by the fair trio, who one and all professed the greatest impatience to hear his comedy. When dinner was over, the ladies began to yawn, and asked M. de Roquelaure if he had any cards in the house. "Cards!" exclaimed the duke, "you forget that Baron is about to read his piece to us!" "So far from forgetting it," replied one of the three, "we shall be delighted to listen to him while we are playing, and thus enjoy two pleasures instead of one." She had hardly finished speaking when Baron, irritated beyond measure by this unceremonious proposal, rose abruptly from his chair, and with a low bow quitted the room, leaving the ladies in despair that their double project of enjoyment was so unexpectedly thwarted.

The farewell appearance of this renowned artist took place September 3rd, 1729, in the character of Venceslas; but so intense was his emotion that he failed to accomplish more than half his task, and was conveyed from the theatre in a state of extreme exhaustion to his own house. There he lingered until December 22nd, in the same year, when he breathed his last, after having been for the second time reconciled to the church by formally renouncing his profession. His wife, the

daughter of his old comrade La Thorillière, and herself an actress of moderate ability, survived him little more than a twelve-month.

Autographs of Baron are very uncommon, the only specimen of his handwriting we have seen being a note addressed to the treasurer of the theatre, soliciting the payment of his pension, "car," he says, "*je suis sans argent.*" The authenticity of this document, formerly in the possession of M. de Pixérécourt, has been contested on the plea of its being undated, and therefore equally attributable to his son Étienne or his grandson François, both successively members of the *Comédie Française*, the former of whom died in 1711, eighteen years before his father, and the latter about 1770.

Beneath one of the most esteemed portraits of this great actor, taken at an advanced period of his life, are inscribed the following lines from the pen of Jean Baptiste Rousseau:

Du vrai, du pathétique il a fixé le ton.
De son art enchanteur l'illusion divine
Prêtait un nouveau lustre aux beautés de Racine,
Un voile aux défauts de Pradon.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF EASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER VII. PARIS.

UPON the invitation of the porter, I mounted the staircase of the house, No. 13, Rue St. Benoît. Arrived at the sixth story, I found myself in front of a black door inscribed with the legend, in white chalk—"George Guichardet"—surrounded by many flourishes, with an ironical request to visitors that they would "ring the bell"—no bell being anywhere visible. I knocked with my stick, but, for some time, in vain. I was about to retire, when the door opened suddenly; a young woman with dishevelled hair, whose attire seemed rather hastily and only partially assumed, begged me to enter. She was a model, she explained, and was giving M. George a sitting; she was also M. George's house-keeper. She was not beautiful, but her eyes were large and sparkling; her teeth—very fully revealed when she smiled—were of dazzling whiteness, and very regular.

She led the way into a large room wearing the look of a studio. Plaster casts adorned the walls, odd pieces of old armour, draperies, fencing-foils, and masks, with, in a prominent place, a skull and crossbones. An easel, bearing a large canvas, stood in the middle of the bare floor. The uniform of a National Guard rested on a chair.

A young Frenchman advanced from an inner room; he surveyed me with a curious look. Then he said gaily: "I thought it might be either a creditor or an agent of police; but I see it is neither the one nor the other."

"It is a capitalist, possibly," suggested the young woman, and then, with a glance at her incomplete toilet, she retreated in some confusion.

"In what can I serve monsieur?" asked M. Guichardet. He had a bright intelligent face, wan and worn and lined, for all its jesting expression. His beard was thick and long; his hair was clipped so closely, that he seemed to be wearing a skull-cap of black velvet.

I explained to him my mission. He grew more and more attentive as I proceeded. I noted the interested look that animated his face when I mentioned the names of Mr. Grisdale and Paul Riel. Finally, I exhibited the triangle of copper.

He took it from me with a suspicious glance over his shoulder, as though to make sure that no one stood behind him. Was this look of enquiry and misgiving habitual among conspirators? He then turned away, and appeared to subject the copper to very close examination. Were there secret marks upon it which had escaped my notice, but which were as guarantees of its authenticity?

"It is sufficient, monsieur," as he returned me the triangle, almost deferentially. "Count upon my assistance now and always. At present, I have no information to give you; but we will see Alexis—that is very necessary. Alexis can help us—or no one can."

We then spoke of more general topics. I stated that I was a correspondent of an English newspaper.

"Your letters will not lack topics," he said. "France has already given constant employment to the historians. She is about to set them to work again. We are going to shift the slides of the magic lantern. Wait only a few hours. The Government is doomed. In a little while," he said significantly, "you will see the

very stones of the city rising up against the Government."

He made some change in his dress. "Now I am at your service," he said. "We will go to Alexis. Only—we must be careful. When we are in the street, do not walk with me, but after me. Let it not be too apparent that we are together. It has been calculated that every fifth man in France is a spy. Let not the police believe us to be conspirators. The monarchy of July is being destroyed by its spies; it has become riddled and rotten as an old moth-eaten coat."

We traversed many streets. I was struck by the number of idle people passing to and fro. They carried no arms, and seemed moved chiefly by curiosity, yet they had an air of expectation. They were streaming along like sightseers to some show of more than ordinary importance.

"Stop," I said. "What is that? Listen!"

Was it distant thunder, or the reverberation of some far-off cannonade? No, it was more sustained and musical.

"They are singing *The Marseillaise* upon the boulevards," said M. Guichardet, with a curious smile. "The people already feel the electric influence. They are rising; the battle-song precedes the battle. You hear? The tune has changed. That is *Mourir pour la Patrie*—the chorus of Girondins in the drama called the *Chevalier Maison Rouge*. Each revolution has its own song. It was *La Parisienne* in 1830. Well, we will make *Mourir pour la Patrie* serve our turn. This way."

We had passed through a wicket, crossed a courtyard, and were ascending a winding staircase.

"Wait here a moment." I was left alone on the third or fourth landing. M. Guichardet went on to the floor above. I could hear a sudden hum of voices as a door opened. Immediately all was silence again.

"Ascend, please." I mounted the stairs. A hand grasped mine. I was led into a large, darkened room. Curtains screened the windows, and the little light of the dreary February day was in great part excluded. Round a small earthenware stove or furnace, which emitted a crimson glow, several figures were gathered—all seemed to be of the student class. They were cutting what looked like a portion of a leaden cistern into fragments, melting

these in an iron ladle, and pouring the liquid metal into bullet-moulds.

A tall, dark-complexioned, handsome young man, with a *Henri Quatre* beard, sat at a small table drawn near to the window, and littered with papers. His frock-coat was buttoned to the chin, a sword-belt girt him, a silk handkerchief without collar was wound round his neck. There was something military in his aspect. This, as I gathered, was M. Alexis.

He did not appear to notice my presence. He was speaking to some two or three who stood in front of his table. One, a workman, to judge by his blouse (but it was not easy invariably to distinguish the *étudiant* and the *blousier*), was exhibiting his stained and wounded hands. Attempts had been made to construct barricades in the *Rue Royale*, but the first efforts of the insurgents had been overcome by the activity of the mounted municipal guards. The railings of the Church of the Assumption had been torn away and employed now as pikes, in feeble resistance to the charges of the cavalry, and now as crow-bars and levers to force up the paving-stones and prize the shop-shutters.

M. Alexis listened without comment. He seemed more interested in the news brought by another of his friends or adherents. The artillery of Vincennes had been ordered to proceed to the *Faubourg St. Antoine*. The roads leading to the several gates of Paris were alive with long columns of cavalry, infantry, and artillery. Paris was to be dragooned into docility.

Further news. In the Chamber of Deputies M. Barrot had formally impeached the Ministry, and been as formally defied. The Government believed its own strength to be supreme—it was supported by a large parliamentary majority, by the favour of the king, and by the enormous garrison of Paris; to say nothing of the army marching to the forcible suppression of all opposition.

M. Alexis advanced and shook me cordially by the hand. I perceived that he was older than I had at first supposed him to be. There were streaks of gray in the chestnut of his hair, in the crisp curls of his beard; and his face was deeply furrowed.

"You are an Englishman—that makes you a friend at once. A poet too—that makes you still more a friend. And then you are a friend of old friends of mine. I have intelligence of you, not merely dating from to-day. I have read your

poems. Mr. Grisdale has written of you. He is known to many of us. And you are the friend, it would seem, of Mr. Leveridge, your great English painter. It is, you see, not only the police who possess information."

"You know Mr. Leveridge?"

"Certainly. But I have not seen him for long years. I was myself a painter, but not of his fame. He was in Paris in the days of July. But the good man is not a politician. He stayed peacefully in the gallery of the Louvre painting a Venus, while we fought in the streets and demolished a monarchy. But the snake was only scotched, not killed, as you say in England; and we have now our work to do over again.

"But we are sure of your sympathy," he resumed, after a pause. "Only bear in mind that desperate men cannot be dainty. We are struggling for our lives now as well as for our freedom. Very likely you will see things that will surprise and shock you. Do not shrink from us on that account. You English conquered your liberties from the hands of tyrants long, long ago. It was not a peaceful victory; fire and sword played their parts. Well, if cannon are to roar again, if blood is to flow once more in the streets of Paris, remember that our cause is just, that we are rising to overthrow a cruel and odious tyranny; that we are fighting that our country France may be free. What you did in the past, that we will do again in the present. With this difference—we will better your example. We will have no more kings. But you are merely a spectator of the historic drama upon which the curtain is rising; you seek information concerning Paul Riel, sometime resident in England. He is a relative of yours, it would appear."

I explained that Paul Riel was my brother-in-law, that he had married my sister.

"I have little news to give you at present. There has been some accident or misapprehension; something has occurred to prevent the presence amongst us of M. Paul Riel. He was looked for, anxiously expected; but he has not arrived. I cannot just now account for this; but information on the subject will certainly reach me in the course of a few hours. M. Riel left England without difficulty. He had assumed an English name, and carried an English passport. He called himself Mr. Doubleday."

I started. "My name!" I said.

"No; it seems that he called himself Mr. Nicholas Doubleday."

"My brother's name!"

"Well, we may presume that he had permission, or thought himself entitled without permission, to assume for the occasion the name of his brother-in-law. In such cases, as you are aware, any name serves; it is a mere formality."

But I could not but picture to myself Nick's indignation at his name being borrowed by Paul—and for a treasonable purpose!

"M. Riel duly arrived at Boulogne," M. Alexis continued. "So far we have distinct information. But he did not reach Paris. As I have said, I cannot just now account for his absence. The matter is of less importance than it threatened to be. A great change has come over the situation of affairs. I can say no more now. Let our friend Guichardet know your address. You may rely upon receiving news of Paul with the utmost promptitude."

M. Guichardet conducted me from the presence of M. Alexis. I was in the streets again, mingling with the restless crowd, sharing its air of curiosity and expectation, moving on with it, I scarce knew whither.

Who was Alexis? As I inferred, he was the president of one of the many committees of insurrection, delegates of the secret societies, holding their meetings in various parts of Paris, and especially at the offices of the republican journals.

The crowd, swelled by other crowds which had assembled in front of the Madeleine, the Polytechnic School, the quays, the Places of the Châtelet, the Bourse, and the Bastille, now seemed mechanically converging to a special point, the Chamber of Deputies. The weather was bitterly cold, the heavens were overcast with dull leaden clouds; but there was still a holiday look about the streets; the factories and workshops were closed, the shops in the leading thoroughfares had opened only for a few hours. There was nothing menacing, as I judged, about the aspect of the people; it is true they now and then sung their revolutionary songs with great fervour; but they carried no arms; they cried simply: "Vive la Réforme!" "Could this be a revolution?" I asked myself. It was more like a festival. The band of a regiment of chasseurs was calmly playing operatic airs in front of the Chamber. Troops of dragoons were trotting to and

fro to disperse the crowd, or as though to form a path for the passage of some state pageant. There were droll incidents, such as happen on holiday occasions, which set the crowd laughing loudly. To escape the dragoons, who were quickening the pace of their horses, and even showing some inclination to charge the people, many lookers-on jumped into the empty basins of the fountains upon the Place de la Concorde. But presently the fountains began to play; escape from the basins became very necessary. Hats were damaged irreparably; clothes were soaked through and through. Especially the crowd laughed at the better dressed of its members who suffered in this way. For the crowd in truth was composed of all classes; glossy frock-coats stood beside blouses; the gloved and the ungloved, the booted and the shoeless, seemed on the best terms with each other. There were many women present; the boys were quite innumerable. They now defied and now humbled themselves before the soldiery. They were seen bravely digging up paving-stones, and in another moment, with cowardly zeal, replacing them at the bidding of a municipal guard standing over them with drawn sword. But the soldiers' backs turned, they were at work again, amassing the materials of a barricade. These proceedings were repeated again and again, much to the amusement of the bystanders. Assuredly nothing very serious seemed likely to occur.

But now over the heads of the people could be seen the glitter of a line of bayonets: the infantry had appeared upon the scene. The artillery occupied the Rue de Bourgogne. The crowd which had been advancing towards the empty Chamber, which had even forced the gates, and penetrated to the gardens, were now forced back by the steady pressure of the masses of troops.

Not a shot had been fired; not a life had been lost. The daylight was waning; I hurried back to my lodgings to write my letter to *The Hourglass*, to address also a

few lines of encouragement to Doris. The Revolution had begun, though as yet there was little evidence of the fact. I was again in the streets after nightfall. It was reported that the Ministry had been dismissed, and that the people were already pacified. The troops had not returned to their barracks; they bivouacked in the streets and open spaces. There had been a bonfire of chairs in the Champs Elysées, and the guard there had been attacked, chiefly by showers of stones, and deprived of their arms.

Meanwhile, barricades were rising in various parts of the city, as though in accordance with some settled plan. The ground was thus marked out for the conflicts of the morrow.

I was too excited to sleep. All night long it seemed to me that I could hear, now near at hand, and now far off, the singing of the crowd and sudden beating of drums—the *rappel* of the National Guard.

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STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VII. ARTIST AND—ARTIST.

THERE was a room in Hinchford, chosen with more than professional reference to light and shade, and fitted up as a private studio for the real Lady Quorne, concerning whom so strange a repute had been launched in Deepweald. It was indeed an extra-typical studio, such as none but amateurs are ever known to dream of, and furnished as if by half-a-dozen painters of different schools working in opposition to one another. Everything that had struck Lady Quorne's fancy elsewhere had here been gathered together—suits of old armour, because she had seen them in Black's studio; oriental bric-à-brac, because she had admired it in Mr. White's; pots and pans, because these had ruled supreme in Mr. Green's. The result was barbaric incongruity, which nevertheless was more picturesque, if the truth must be told, than what mostly came out of it.

In a chair of the curule order, one sunny morning, sat she whom Gaveston had so oddly, and yet so naturally, taken for Cousin Alicia, dressed, in Genoese fashion, in a black lace mantilla, and holding her fan half closed before her. She was in one of her good humours to-day, smiling and pleased, and with a cat-like enjoyment of the summer sun. One almost expected to hear her purr. It was not a usual mood with her, and indeed, she had no usual mood, as Walter Gordon had found out for himself in the last seven days. For it was he who was at this moment trying to

make her picture, and, it must be owned, thus far only trying; and, at the moment, not trying over-hard.

"It is very comfortable here," said Mademoiselle Clari. "I like the sun. I feel like a peach to-day—one of milord's peaches."

"Somebody or other used to dip his brush in sunbeams," said Walter. "I wish I could get some of the sun into my picture."

"Oh, never mind that! I like to be painted. It is so good as going to sleep, and being stroked in a doze. Do you know how strange it is to be here?"

"Why?"

"Among all these old things—and sitting in a lace veil in the sun. Oh, monsieur, do you know how old I am?"

"Let me see. I think Venus was two thousand at the siege of Troy. Suppose we say three thousand—and that will make you a thousand years younger."

"Three thousand? Surely, no. But you are right. I have felt more old."

"Of course you have. I was awfully old at twenty. I'm not now."

"I like being with you." She spoke so much as if she meant it, and so suddenly, that Walter, though the sentiment did not seem to him either unusual or unnatural, almost coloured with the pleasure of hearing so frank an expression of it. "I like happy people. They are so—so—so—what shall I say?" she said lazily, as if it were impossible to think and bask at the same time. "So—happy."

Walter thought that she also looked exquisitely happy as she sunned herself.

"Do you know," he said, as he made a rather random stroke, "I think I shall call this picture 'Felicità?'"

"Felicità?"

"Yes; because that means all happiness and all good-fortune, doesn't it? And you must be the happiest and most fortunate woman I ever knew."

"Have you then known such very unhappy women, monsieur?"

She still spoke lazily; but her fan gave a little impatient flutter as if by way of protest against something or other—perhaps against the unwonted disuse to which it was being condemned. But, lazily as she spoke, Walter caught a touch either of melancholy, or sentiment, or coquetry—it was hard to say which of the three.

"Well—no. Most women are neither happy nor unhappy—that is, they are very much like men. But you see I was thinking of what I should like to be, if I were a woman, and what you are."

"You would like to be like me?"

"Like whom else? You are greater than any queen."

"Queens can do as they like."

"Not at all. But you can do what you like; and can be queen in every country. And then you have your Art, mademoiselle. I always think, if I were not a painter, I would be a prima donna—not a tenor; tenors are mostly imbeciles. But to rule the world without effort, and just because you are what you are—why yours is the most glorious life in all the world. Yes," he went on, always ready to warm up into a flight of enthusiasm, "I can't imagine anything more glorious than to live for the sake of Art, and have one's reward into the bargain—one's earthly reward, I mean. Of course I know your ambition is a villa on Como—but then what a divine path to get to it! Yours must be the ideal life. I must call the picture 'Felicità.'"

Their talk implies some intimacy. And, in fact, since the casual meeting in The Five Adzes, their life as fellow-guests at Hinchford had brought these two together by a common process of natural affinity, which mostly looks like contrast. The prima donna, being no longer in her very first youth, was naturally attracted; more than a girl would have been, by the mere good looks and easy high spirits of the young painter; and he was as much flattered by her notice as any man would have been. Perhaps he would have felt a little less flattered if he had known that Gaveston's report of his poverty had been a main reason for her notice, which he

believed the result of his own favourite qualities. But so it had certainly been; at least in the first instance. There were other guests at Hinchford, and the prima donna had made a point of asserting her independence and superiority to conventionalities, by prominently attaching herself to him through the first dull evening of cucumbers and the musical-glasses. If he had been in her eyes the rich semi-amateur he was, she would have treated him as cavalierly as she had treated the others; and this story would never have been told.

The portrait-painting, as well as a common and separate recollection of The Five Adzes, had ripened the original comradeship at Hinchford, until the portrait became less a work of art than an excuse for an idle morning talk, when neither of the two had anything else to do, which was pretty often. Neither could manage to cultivate interest enough in the cucumbers to last through a whole summer morning, and Mademoiselle Clari was too great a personage to give, even for friendship's sake, singing lessons to a Countess of Quorne. The countess, though the greatest in the land round Deepweald, was nobody in the greater world where Clari reigned almost, if not quite supreme.

Walter Gordon was first a little interested, then flattered, then a great deal interested, then a great deal flattered, until he found the great attraction of Hinchford in her whom artistically he had affected to look down upon. He had, after all, never studied scientifically the genus prima donna; and, if Clari was a type, he found it decidedly worth studying—at least he thought so. There was one great and special attraction about her—he never knew precisely what she was going to be. And that was good practice for a painter. If anything went the least wrong, or even for the very reason that everything refused to go wrong, there was the storm in the coffee-cup in one form or another. One day she was gay, another sullen, another both at once; to-day peaceful and—as she herself put it with some conscious insight—like nothing so much as one of Lord Quorne's peaches growing in a particularly sunny corner. There was excitement in her companionship, like reading a book in which it is impossible to guess what the next incident is going to be, even for the most practised of readers. The interest was not the less because she was very far indeed from being a good talker. She was not even witty; and never, by any chance,

said anything that would have been remembered—had it not been hers. She would at times reveal vistas of ignorance that were a little bewildering, scarcely compensated by any special knowledge of the world or of human nature. Indeed, she seemed to read all the people, with whom she had come in contact, through special glasses of her own; so that Walter occasionally caught himself wondering and thinking about himself—not, What am I? but in the form of What does she think I am? And the questions, he became aware, meant very different things.

"You will make a mistake," said Clari, "if you call your picture 'Felicità.'"

"Why? But perhaps so. The fact is, I don't know how to paint you; I ought to make a new portrait every day. Do you know you are never the same, hardly two minutes together? I get on very well one day, and the next it is no more you than it is Lady Quorne, and I have to begin all over again."

Clari drew herself together, as if trying to get deeper into the sunshine.

"It is good to talk to somebody; and I like to talk to you. I don't care to talk to most people. I like them to talk to me, because they always say good things. But they never seem to care for what I say; and so they don't know me, and think like you do. You are an artist."

"I want to be."

"Then how can you talk all that nonsense about Art you do? I thought it was only amateurs and people like Lady Quorne who talk about Art like that."

"Like that?"

"Yes; as if it was a game of play."

"Do you mean you don't love your Art, mademoiselle?"

"Love it! What for?"

"Surely if anyone on earth loves Art it ought to be you."

"Do you know what I feel like, sitting here in the sun? Oh, I know what Lady Quorne would say—but do you? Well, it makes me feel so old—ever so old—and among all these old things and in this lace veil! It is not the first time I have sat in the sun, *Corpo di Bacco!* But not often; and that makes me feel when I have done that all the more."

Walter Gordon felt her falling into a new mood, and scarcely made any pretence of painting further. He must learn this new Clari that was going to be. But she only touched the new ground, and laughed, as she said:

"The idea of you calling me 'Felicità!' I wanted you to know me, monsieur." And the laugh died away suddenly.

"Don't I know you?"

"Not much. But, ah! never mind. Let me see the picture. I am tired. There, let me see. Is that me?"

"Not in the least you."

"But I want to see myself—what I am."

"Then I'm afraid I must lend you my eyes. My hands won't do."

"I want to know," she said, quite simply and naturally, but with a frown that drew her black eyebrows together, and in which he seemed to read a depth foreign to, and yet closely connected, in some occult way, with her passing mood whatever it might be. "Your name is Gordon. Why?"

"It is my father's; I don't know else why. And it is not an uncommon name."

"No?"

"It's rather common than otherwise, but a good one. And I'm particularly proud of it. Of course I don't suppose you ever heard of——" "*Comus*," he was going to say, but reflected in time that he would only be exposing the ignorance of a great English work, on the part of an Italian singer. That was his family pride—the forgotten work of the forgotten uncle, who had run away from fame, and had never been heard of again.

Clari began to play rapidly with her fan. Whether that special summer sun, in that special studio, under special circumstances that he could not have any knowledge of, was filling her with old recollections or associations, or whether she was merely moved by a causeless caprice, she seemed in a mood of half confidence, half reticence—the two things mostly go together.

"It vexes me, it enrages me, you are called Gordon. I hate the name."

"You have known it before?"

"And you would call your picture 'Felicità?'"

Walter felt himself on the eve of a story, that the faintest symptom of curiosity would cut short at the outset. He returned to his picture, and pretended to busy himself without seeming to heed or to listen.

Doubtless the sun, and something else, were affecting her more than she knew—far more than he could dimly imagine. Everybody knew that Mademoiselle Clari lived alone, for Prosper and her *femme-de-chambre* were nobody. Had she not

been notoriously respectable, she would never have been at Hinchford. And, as Walter himself was old enough to have learned, she was arrived at a point of life when a lonely life, in man or woman, begins to tell with full force. A story she must have had, though she kept it so completely and hazily in the background that nobody thought of her having one, and assumed that she had been made, full fledged, like prime *donne* in general. And, at that point of life, a story becomes a burden. We want to begin a new one—at least to make confession of the old, and to receive absolution. We need a confessor; and are apt to choose our confessor oddly, supposing we are women, and have no priest or doctor. Men are better off—they can bore their friends; and besides, their stories are very seldom their lives, as women's stories are.

But his inattention took long to pique her. At last however:

“Call it ‘*Infelicità*, monsieur—Unhappiness, if you please. Yes, I am very gay, and just as unhappy as the sun is bright, and as the day is long. And the sun is bright, even here, in England. It is so bright and warm, it wants to make me cry.”

“You have a very intense nature, *madoiselle*—that is all.”

“No? I don't know about nature, but I know about me. I felt just like this before, when I was not like what I am now; when I was very young and very poor, and wanted everything in the world—all the diamonds and all the joy.”

“And you have them?”

“Oh, the diamonds and the joy. And I still want everything in the world.”

“What would you like?”

“How do I know? I did not know then. I know what I did—I went out into the Carnival, and I sold myself to be what I am. No, monsieur—not what you think; it was to the devil, not to a man. It was to what you call Art; and then you say I ought to love Art, when it has but given me what I do not want. I hate diamonds, monsieur, and I hate joy. I hate the people when they make me into a queen—that cannot get what she wants nor do what she will.”

Walter could not help smiling as he remembered the history of The Five Adzes, and how it seemed essential to her self-content that she should not be without the applause of bores, for want of princes. And he felt tolerably sure, that if she were de-

frauded of a single bouquet, she would be considerably inconsistent with her present mood. And yet there could be no question but that her present mood was just as real as the other, and surely deeper.

“And so,” she went on, with fresh eagerness, “I want to go out into the Carnival again. I feel here like I felt in Rome. I do not know what I would find there; but I want to go. I remember all I saw—all the dresses, and the diamonds, and the great ladies in them; I have often seen that, but did not feel the same as when I was poor, nor remember. It is the sun that makes me remember, or something. There is the Carnival all going on round about outside, just as then. It was in The Adzes, and the Garde-chasse, and the *Femme-de-chambre* were in all the diamonds and fine clothes. And you are in the Carnival too, because you are young, and happy, and poor. I do not know my way, but I want to go. I am tired of hating; it is hard to hate, with the sun all over me. I wonder if I would sell myself for what I want now; but I do not know. I would not sell myself to Art for it again. Art is a devil—Corpo di Bacco, No!”

Surely this was no mood. And yet, was it the real Clari? Walter, for the first time in his life, seemed to be hearing a real woman's real cry, out of the mists through which she could scarcely see that her heart was real. It was no mockery of sentiment, at any rate, such as he had studied at Lindenheim and elsewhere. It was new to him, and it moved him into beginning to understand.

“You are a man; do you know what it is to hate a man? Or is it that only what women do? But—yes; I am tired of hating. I should like to see him die, and to know who killed him, and then to rest and have done. No; not what you think. I would not stab him or poison him—not at all. I would do to him what he has done to me; no more. If he has taken but one eye of me, I would not take his two.” She settled herself back into her seat, and went on with a sort of calm satisfaction. “I should like to make him feel what Art does mean, and what it is of cruelty. I should like to make him feel what a mother does, *Gran Dio*, when she is robbed of her heart and of her child, if a man can feel like that! I should like to make his god, his art, into a curse for him. I should like to pay back the sale-money at good interest. And

then I should like to do nothing more but find a little love—I know not what—when I have done with hating, for I should have no malice when I had done.”

Walter kept himself busy at his easel. But there was one moment when he almost shuddered at a certain clear, cold, luxurious tone in which she dwelt on the idea of revenge, upon some unknown man, for some mysterious and unimaginable injury. And it was all the more impressive, because it seemed utterly removed from the hint of a suspicion on her part that her desire was evil. It was simply the eye-for-an-eye doctrine, preached by those of old time, and might have come down by inheritance to a Hebrew, had she not been—on the best of best authority—pure Italian. He did not know how to answer; he was beginning to find himself drawn into an unreclaimed region of human nature, such as few men find guides into.

“You see,” she went on, “it is hard to live without some things. I do not love, and if I do not hate I should die.”

“I am afraid you have in some way suffered cruelly,” said Walter at last—stupidly enough; but then he was suddenly forced into a strange country, and did not know his way. “But cannot one not love without hating?”

“How do I know? Would you not hate one who——”

“Perhaps I could tell you, if I knew all.”

“Oh, how would you know? You believe in Art—you,” she said, scornfully. “You think it is a great thing—how would you tell? You would be a *prima donna*—like me. I want to go out into the wide air. Do you think it pleases me, hating? Not at all. But one must live. We will go and see *milord’s* cucumbers.”

They went; and found not only *milord’s* cucumbers, but *milord*. The contest was becoming exciting; and Lord Quorne was seldom to be found more than half-a-yard from the frame. Long before she had reached them, Clari had become so gracious and radiant again that only Walter, who knew, could see a trace of any excitement in her. But he did see in her scarcely yet separated brows and a certain distant look in her eyes, what proved to him that what he had seen was, for once, no passing mood. If it had been, every trace would have disappeared long before; in an instant, indeed. A minute’s continuance of an emotion, however slight the sign,

was, so far as it went, a revelation of the real Clari.

“Look there!” said Lord Quorne, with triumph. By-the-way, he had taken rather a fancy to Walter Gordon, who, though not given to watch these growths of nature, was able to take a sympathetic interest in any sort of contest; and, in short, generally found himself agreeable to most people. “Look there—it grows! Hinchford will win yet, Gordon—will win yet, *mademoiselle*. Gordon, does Lady Quorne want you to-morrow? No? That’s well. You shall drive over with me to Deepweald, if you’ve got nothing better to do.”

“And my picture must wait,” said Clari, sweetly but reproachfully.

“It must wait, *mademoiselle*,” said Walter. “I must think, before I begin, upon it all over again.”

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

ON AVON AND KENNET.

A SINCERE admirer of the genius of Heine and of his sublimely simple idea of classification—the division of all things into those which could and those which could not be eaten, I commenced my wanderings on the globe with a strong determination to divide my attention impartially between the two classes, the eatable and the uneatable. Thus, while I ascended the loftiest mountains and plunged into the deepest caverns, extracting pleasure from forest and fountain, crevasse and coalpit, I failed not to assay the meat and drink of each country. At Göttingen, celebrated as the immortal author just cited has it, “for its sausages and its university,” I devoted equal attention to each of those “institutions;” at *Marseilles* I visited with like pleasure the busy port and that *Retraite* where they give you sea-urchins under the name of sea-chestnuts, and such *bourride* and *bouillabaisse* as *Terray’s* tavern could never rival; at *Aberdeen* I admired the granite city and the *speldring*, a thirst-provoking fish of excellent savour, a prime “shoeing-horn” for good liquor; at *Rome* I revelled in the *Coliseum* and the *Vatican*, and eke in the flesh of the *Lucanus aper*; at *Colchester* I found the Roman remains and the oysters equally attractive; in the *Bernese Oberland* I have eaten stewed chamois, tough but savoury, under the shadow of the *Jungfrau*. These are a few of my successful efforts, but I am compelled to add that my “failures,” like *Brummell’s*,

have been many. The last blow was received a few months since. On a brisk spring morning, a choice specimen of weather, made up of wind, rain, dust, biting cold, and blinding glimpses of sunlight, I was passing down Bond-street when I perceived in Mr. Grove's shop a magnificent salmon labelled "Christchurch, thirty pounds." A bright thought flashed upon me. "I will go," I murmured, "and beard the salmon"—this remark would have been better applied to the barbel—"in his favourite haunts." On the next afternoon I found myself at Christchurch, at the head of Christchurch Harbour, and on the narrow point of land above the junction of Avon and Stour. There is an inn—I beg pardon, hotel—at Christchurch, which is much visited by brethren of the rod, and is remarkable for its numerous stuffed birds and Gargantuan punch-bowls of blue and white, the pride of mine host; who, albeit mayor of the town, is yet not swollen with pride, but a pleasant man, genial and conversational withal, a favourite with anglers, and not above smoking his pipe in his own parlour among the towns-folk, who regard his oracular utterances with infinite reverence. An hotel-keeper who is also a mayor is calculated to inspire all but very ill-regulated minds with awe. It is a serious thing to reflect that if I were to object to my dinner or my bill I might be committed to a dungeon by mine host in his magisterial capacity, and that I am, for the time being, the captive of his bow and of his spear. But my terrors are premature, for the jovial and rotund mayor of Christchurch is of another complexion from the continental mayors and inn-keepers whom I have chanced to encounter. He has but one fault, and that is due to the early season. Of course I demand salmon for dinner, and am told that none is to be had. I had seen Christchurch salmon sprawling in London with salmon from Tay and other rivers, and find myself, in the earliest of early salmon rivers, fishless!

Of all the instances of the forethought of the monks of old, Christchurch is perhaps the most remarkable. Pitched at the head of a fine harbour, on the very point of contact of the Avon and Stour, it once provided, and at certain seasons still provides, a choice supply of fish. The lordly salmon, like some great argosy, speeds up the Avon, grandly passing by the natty little trout as creatures of little ac-

count. In the forests of weeds which cumber the course of the Stour, lurk mighty pike, ready to shoot out on their prey as occasion offers. In the ooze and slime of both rivers bask eels of astounding size and fatness—fit for the table of a great abbot. In the New Forest, hard by, dwell—but, alas! dwell no longer—stags of ten, lusty boar, and other four-footed "provant" for the refectory table. Thus the cowed dwellers at the abbey were well supplied for feast and fast days—especially the latter—and, from the elevated ground of their stronghold, could afford to despise the raids of inferior marauders. Their grand church survives to this day, and draws to the quiet little town to which it gives its name many pilgrims from Bournemouth, one of the saddest of watering-places. Like the French countess, I like "robust invalids," the good people who go to Spa and Baden and enjoy themselves as much as they can. Bournemouth is made triste by the presence of hapless brethren and sisters, in whom the sword has worn the scabbard too sadly thin—whose unnaturally bright eyes and hollow cheeks scare the trifler by suggestions of his own fate, or that of his dearest ones. But Christchurch is delightful. When the wind is in the wrong quarter, or the tide is unfavourable, and the fish, from these and other causes—among which may be numbered what Artemus Ward called "pure cussidness"—will not bite, then pensive strolls may be made in the abbey church, rich in monuments and legends. Architects and other artists may well pass a contemplative half-hour over the Salisbury chapel, as it is called—a bone of contention between the "lay impropiator" and the churchwardens. Lord Malmesbury, it would seem, wished to "appropriate" (or "impropriate," which is it?) the tomb of the last of the Plantagenets—the famous Countess of Salisbury, who refused to be beheaded—as a mausoleum for his own dead wife, and the churchwardens refused to sanction what they considered a desecration of a time-honoured monument. Whatever the merits of this abstruse legal controversy may be, the Salisbury chapel is beyond all price as a specimen of the very latest Gothic style—just then impinged upon by the flowing forms of the Renaissance. As an example of a period of transition this monument is perhaps unique. In the clear-cut lines of the original form, and the rich efflorescence of the minor details,

one seems to see the bud of the modern world grafted on the trunk of the old. There is the old sturdy outline, but over this stern form runs riot the uncontrollable force, the wild and luxuriant fancy of youth. It is Tithonus crowned with roses by the Dawn, the stern Matterhorn gilded by the hue of summer, the skeleton of a dead world with the daisies of the new blossoming through the cavities of its skull.

Other and more cheerful memorials of a bygone time are found in Christchurch. There is, or was—for I did not see it—the oaken beam which, by some confusion of mind on the part of the mediæval workmen, was, when first fixed in its place, a foot too short, but was lengthened out by a miracle; and there is, sorely battered, the monument to Sir John Chydieke, slain in the Wars of the Roses. I am not aware that Sir John—whose effigy represents a gallant warrior—was remarkable for sanctity in his lifetime; but it is a fact—not speaking much for the common sense of mankind—that scrapings of his tomb were considered efficacious in divers serious maladies: a faith useful, perhaps, to Christchurch, but not calculated to perpetuate the glory of the sculptor.

From Christchurch to Ringwood there is pleasant dawdling by Avonside, on the fringe of the New Forest, and rare good fishing too for those who know the right spots, for hardly a stream in England is more variously fishful than the Avon. Above Ringwood it is pleasant to diverge into easy-going happy Dorsetshire. In days gone by, it was the fashion to pity the lot of the Dorsetshire labourer; but since I have made the acquaintance of that agriculturist, I am by no means disposed to expend any surplus sentiment upon him. I do not think he cares about it; for he is a good fellow, and a vastly more shrewd, than some of those writers who think that the acme of human intelligence is to be found between Fleet-street and St. Giles's, dream of. Earning not more than sixteen shillings per week, with a cottage standing him in two shillings, he hardly appears wealthy to the workers in metals who earn twice or three times as much. But he is—on many estates at least: notably on Lord Shaftesbury's—quite as well lodged as his northern brother, and with his garden, and pigs, and glean- ing, and milk thrown in, is by no means badly off. He has less money to spend in beer than his analogue at Barnsley; but

he is none the worse for that. There is no denying the fact, however, that the Dorsetshire man has a wonderful capacity for malt liquor when he can get it, and by that sign may be known as a genuine Saxon. But he is gentle and kindly withal. The progress of modern enlightenment has not yet impelled him to be insolent to his employers, albeit these tax his patience severely at times. Great land-owners in Dorsetshire tell me that they are obliged to stand between the farmer and the labourer; that the farmer expects cottages to be built for his men, but not too many, lest he should be overpowered with poor's rates. From the former point of view, this is not so unnatural as might be supposed, for the Dorsetshire labourer is only too apt to look upon parish relief, not as a desperate resource, but as a normal condition of existence. Perhaps the best type of labourer may be seen at Wimborne St. Giles, where Lord Shaftesbury has tried every possible plan to goad his people out of their "happy-go-lucky" groove of life. But even there the curse of pauperism is ever present. The money made at harvest time is spent in beer, and the cottage-folk want help in winter. Dorsetshire Hodge, however, has a decided advantage at that season over the northern farmer, and, for that matter, the eastern. Bating what is required for cooking, his delicious climate spares him expenditure for fuel. On this point he is somewhat at issue with the landowners. Determined that the reproach that farm-labourers are lodged no better than their masters' pigs shall no longer be justified by facts, the great proprietors are carrying on a crusade against thatch: "I have not," said one of these to the writer, "half-a-dozen thatched roofs left on my land. I grant you that thatch is picturesque; so is an Italian pifferaro or a Spanish beggar picturesque, but unsavoury. Thatch connotes vermin, dirt, and slovenliness, and I shall not rest till it is swept away." Dorsetshire Hodge is quite shrewd enough to see what a good bargain he makes of the new-fangled cottages, and takes them as fast as they are finished; but now and then he displays a lingering affection for wattle-and-dab walls and thatched roofs, on account of their warmth. At Cranborne, the place from which the Marquis of Salisbury takes his second title, as wobegone a spot as I ever saw, a large number of small proprietors set their faces against modern improvements, and stick to their

thatched houses like sturdy old Conservatives as they are. The manor-house here is a fine specimen of the transition stage of domestic architecture. The housekeeper shows me Queen Elizabeth's saddle, and the bed in which that wandering sovereign slept, decked with much curious needlework. I think I should like, for a change, to see a big country house in which Queen Elizabeth did not sleep. It would be a novelty. There are funny wicker helmets and quaint doublets preserved at Cranborne, which were formerly worn by the watchers of the deer in Cranborne-chase, when, in the good old times, deer-stealing was a recognised and not dishonourable profession. Desperate fights occurred from time to time, but these battles were regarded rather in the light of local amusements than as infringements of the law. Possibly Cranborne-chase was the last place where the quarter-staff lingered as a weapon of offence and defence—a fact which explains the wicker helmets and padded doublets of the rangers and their men.

It is pleasant almost everywhere by Avon-side—by lofty-spired Salisbury, and again above that quiet city towards Amesbury through a charming valley, above which rises the great rolling table-land of Salisbury Plain, with solitary Stonehenge frowning over the wavelets of pasture. Away over the Wans Dyke is the pretty Kennet. Alexander Pope was a good poet but a poor fisherman, for he speaks of the “Kennet swift for silver eels renown'd”—the piscatorial fame of that delightful stream being distinctly referable to its magnificent trout. Probably Pope met the eels in a pie, and, his soul being glad within him, he blessed and immortalised those savoury fishes and the river they came from. Before joining the Thames the Kennet dawdles by some pleasant places by Hungerford and Newbury, famous for its battlefields, its martyrs, and for the great “Jack of Newbury,” who raised a hundred men to march to Flodden Field, and got the better of a match at hard words with Cardinal Wolsey. It is, however, with the upper Kennet Valley that I am presently concerned—with Ramsbury Manor, where Burdett lies buried, and where Tom Durfey, whose verses, like Pope's, were in inverse ratio to his skill in fishing, “angled for a trout the best of any man in England.” But there are memories of Kennet Vale of less merry key than that of Tom Durfey. By the

margin of the troutful stream lies, embedded in woods, Littlecote House, the seat of the Pophams.

In the Long Gallery hangs the picture of that Judge Popham who founded the fortunes of his family. He did not, however, build the fine old sixteenth-century mansion in the well-wooded park by the Kennet. That was the work of an older race than his—of a name which stains the history of Wiltshire, but shines brilliantly in the pages of Ruff's Guide to the Turf. How many, I wonder, of the gallant soldiers who read the telegram posted in the camp before Sevastopol, containing these few words, “The Derby has been won by Wild Dayrell,” had the faintest idea of who the original Wild Dayrell had been? They knew, of course, all about the horse and his ancestry, his previous doings, and the convenient manner in which favourite after favourite came to grief, until the great race was made easy to the “handsomest and best-topped horse that ever won it.” They also knew that there were romantic passages connected with him; that he was the first horse owned by Mr. Popham, and the only one, save an animal bought to lead him in his gallops; and that he had been trained in no famous racing-stable, but in his owner's park at Littlecote. Few but Wiltshire men, however, could at that time have known much about the man from whom he took his name, and whose history is pointed to by Sir Walter Scott in a note to Rokeby:

Mine be the eve of tropic sun,
No twilight paleness dims his ray.
No midnight dews his wrath allay,
With disk-like battle-target red,
He rushes to his burning bed;
Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
Then sinks at once, and all is night.

Nothing can be better than this from the lips of a buccaneer retired from business. Bertram Risingham naturally employs an image familiar to him during a great portion of his life, and employs it with vigour and truthfulness. The personage on whom his character is modelled was not quite of Risingham's opinion, for to the boldness and wildness of the wolf he united the cunning of the fox.

For nearly three centuries the woods around Littlecote, the great bedroom in the ancient mansion, and the stone stile near to it, have been haunted by a grim apparition. Village gossips hesitate not to affirm, that when the moon is at the full, those

who are courageous enough to watch the Darell-stile between eleven o'clock and midnight, will behold the vision of a cavalier of the Elizabethan period riding desperately towards it; that as he nears the stile he will take hold of his horse and set him at it; but that just as the animal is about to take the easy leap, a ball of fire, bearing some resemblance to a child coiled up, will roll on the ground just before the obstacle; that the horse will swerve, pitching the cavalier on to his head, and will then gallop off ridden by the fire-child who has caused this disaster. This has been seen of many hailing from Ramsbury, and eke from Hungerford, any time these three hundred years. It is a good, genuine ghost, probably the best article of the kind in the county of Wilts, and is backed by a tradition which, unlike most traditions, is supported by contemporary evidence of a remarkable kind.

William Darell, son of Sir Edward Darell, Knight, seems to have been a representative fast man of the Elizabethan period, and in his peculiarly scampish youth forgathered with another mauvais sujet, afterwards the famous Judge Popham. After the manner of François Villon and his comrades of a century before, these worthies, when in their normal condition of impecuniosity, were, it is affirmed, wont to cut a purse or waylay an unhappy cit in the desolate fields of White Conduit or the dreary spots of the Bath-road. After a few years of this life, Popham, like a wise man, saw the error of his ways, and pursued with ardour the noble profession of the law, in which he ultimately attained the highest rank. Will Darell, on the opposite tack, comported himself so ill, as to merit the sobriquet of "Wild Darell." Whether he spent any part of his life on the Spanish Main is not clear, but that he was always in trouble is proved by numerous letters of his own brought to light within a few years. He was a terrible roysterer, this impecunious Mercutio. Always over head and ears in debt, he had a happy knack of quarrelling with everybody but Popham, who, although living cleanly himself, never quite turned the cold shoulder on his ancient boon companion, nor forgot that they had emptied many a flagon at The Mermaid, that they had ruffled it in "Paul's," swaggered at the ordinary, and, mayhap, played "gourd and fullom" on unsuspecting wights, who could not keep their hands from the dice-box. It is not difficult to

picture the future legal luminary ringing in the false dice, and Wild Darell standing by, ready, in case of dispute, to clap his hand on his rapier, to swear that his friend is a gentleman of good estate, and then and there frighten the gull out of his wits. There are queer stories dug out of dry-as-dust chronicles of Darell's strange "carryings on" after he came to his estate, a right goodly one as it was—to wit, the mansion and estate of Littlecote with seven manors, and three thousand four hundred acres of land, thirty farmhouses, twenty cottages, and thereunto three mills, with messuages and tenements appertaining. It is not easy to ascertain the precise condition of Darell's balance-sheet when he inherited this fine property; but, as he was in difficulties shortly after, it is obvious that he must have post-obited, and sixty-per-cented, and bedevilled his property beforehand, for while owner of Littlecote he was perpetually short of money. His credit, too, was not very good, for he explains in a letter to a former creditor that he never had a loan of him save "upon a goode pawne of plate and not above three moneths or six." Yet he was "bien vu" by personages of distinction. There is still extant a correspondence of his with Sir Francis Walsingham touching the raising of troops in the county, the letters of Sir Francis being couched in the most courteous terms, and giving minute directions as to the disposition of men and calivers, powder and bullets. Another person with whom his correspondence has a more suspicious air, was his cousin, Reginald Scriven, secretary to Lord Chancellor Bromley, in which he counsels the said Reginald to "let fall in substance this"—that he was possessed of a manor of the value of three hundred pounds a year, that he would make over the reversion of it to Bromley, who had married a kinswoman of his, on the sole condition that Bromley would be his "good lord"—in other words, take his part as a good patron in some trouble which was upon him. This letter, written in 1583, or six years before Wild Darell quitted this life, must have referred to something much more serious than an accusation of having been concerned in the murder of one Blount nearly ten years before, and could hardly refer to the divorce case in which he figured as a co-respondent in 1569-70. It was only during the recent battle of antiquarians over the Littlecote legend, that the identity of the A. Hungerford with Lady Ann

Hungerford was established. This same lady's letters to her "dear Dorrell" are still at the Rolls Office, and their tenor would have put Barbara Villiers, Nell Gwyn, and Louise de Quérouailles to the blush. She expresses her undying affection in language which, despite its coarseness, is interesting from its very intensity. Some of these missives to her "dear Dorrell" seem to have been intercepted by her husband, Sir Walter Hungerford, of Farley Castle, who, after obtaining a divorce, lived peaceably, till 1695, the life of a county magnate. His wife, like other wild associates of Darell, made a good end. After her divorce, she retired to Louvain, where, in 1603, she died in the odour of sanctity, "full of good works." Long before this, Wild Darell died in the odour not of sanctity but of brimstone, and was laid in the Darell aisle of Ramsbury church—that is to say, if his body were really buried at all, and not carried off by the devil, as was believed at Ramsbury and through the whole country-side. Dreadful rumours concerning him came into circulation about 1577; and, as far as can be ascertained, the story told over their firesides by the trembling villagers of Ramsbury was substantially that gathered by Lord Webb Seymour and told by him to Sir Walter Scott: One winter's night the female doctor of Shefford, in Berkshire, was called up by two men, mounted and accoutred as servants of a good family. By the promise of a large bribe they induced the woman to render her services in secret to a gentlewoman in need of them. Attracted by the large earnest-money given her there and then, she consented to be blindfolded and lifted on horseback, when the party set off at a gallop, and rode on and on for many hours. At last she was lifted from the horse and walked along a little way on the ground, and then up a number of steps. Feeling curious, the woman counted the steps, but could see nothing till, the bandage being removed from her eyes, she found herself in a grand state-bedchamber. In a bed with heavy curtains lay the lady who required her services, closely masked, and by her side stood a gentleman, richly dressed and also masked, who, after giving her money and directions, left the room. Returning shortly afterwards, he enquired whether the child were a boy or a girl, and then seizing it, drew near to the great fireplace, in which an enormous fire was blazing, and threw the babe into the midst

of the flames. The woman was so horror-struck that she grasped the rich curtains to prevent herself from falling, and on being blindfolded and reconducted home, found a piece of the curtain in her hand. Terrified at the crime she had been compelled to witness, she made a deposition before a magistrate. Littlecote, as having the worst reputation of any house in the country-side, was visited, the number of stairs and the bedroom identified, and conviction driven home by the piece which fitted into the curtains. Wild Darell was tried for murder at Salisbury before Judge Popham, and convicted, but saved by a *nolle prosequi* being entered for the Crown after the verdict. The price paid for this miscarriage of justice was the reversion of the Littlecote estate. Judge Popham had not long to wait for his reward. Darell, who was an excellent horseman, took to riding wildly about the country, as if endeavouring to escape some dreadful object. Tradition has it that, putting his horse at the low stone stile, not three feet in height, known as the Darell-stile to this day, an apparition of a child in a ball of fire caused the steed to swerve, and Darell, an excellent horseman, was thrown upon the stile, and there and then broke his neck.

Until the publication of Rokeby, and of Aubrey's memoir of Judge Popham in the Letters from the Bodleian, no printed account of the Littlecote tragedy had appeared. It would seem that Lord Webb Seymour picked up the story in the neighbourhood where I have heard it myself in the form of a rude ballad, in which Dayrell, Darell, or Dorrell, is pronounced Durrel. The reply of Ramsbury to the sceptic is to point to the house and its occupation by Mr. Popham, to the Darell-stile, and the Darell-aisle in Ramsbury church, where no inscription or sculptured stone marks the place among his ancestors of the last of the Darells.

It was hardly, however, to be supposed that a legend like this would not be attacked by the gentle antiquary; for even Lord Campbell, although he tells the story, objects to it as compromising, on unsatisfactory evidence, the reputation of so illustrious a lawyer as Judge Popham. Several years ago the late Mr. C. E. Long made a gallant effort to reduce the story to the consistency of a myth. In some able papers in the Wilts Archaeological Magazine, he pointed out that, local tradition to the contrary notwithstanding,

Wild Darell died in his bed; that no record exists of his trial at Salisbury; that the supposed date of the murder, as established by a document presently to be cited, was ten or eleven years before Darell's death; that Popham was not a judge at that time; that a *nolle prosequi* entered for the Crown after the verdict—a rare but not impossible course of procedure—would have been the act of the Attorney-General, not of the judge; and so forth. It was altogether a clever attempt to whitewash Wild Darell, but turned out passing ill for his fame and that of Judge Popham.

Among other papers discovered by Mr. Poulett Scrope and Sir Duffus Hardy is the original copy of the deposition made on her death-bed by Mrs. Barnes, of Great Shefford, before Mr. Anthony Bridges, justice of the peace, in which, saving the blindfolding—perhaps forgotten by the woman or omitted by Mr. Bridges—the counting of the stairs and the piece of the curtain, the main incidents of the popular version of the story are recited. Two or three extracts from this remarkable document will show how very exactly the fireside story of Ramsbury corresponds with the formal deposition.

Mrs. Barnes told, with much circumlocution and repetition, how "there came unto her house at Shefford two men, in manner like serving-men, in black frieze coats, saying they came in the name of Mistress Knyvett, wife to Sir Henry Knyvett, to bid her come to her. She departed in their company, and rode most of the night. Towards day, they brought her unto a fair house, and alighted her near the door of the house, at the which house one of those that brought her made some little noise."

To them came "a tall, slender gentleman, having upon him a large gown of black velvet, and bringing a light with him, who so soon as she was entered into the said door made fast the same, and shut out those that brought her, and presently brought her upstairs into a fair and great chamber, being hanged all about with arras, in the which chamber was a chimney, and therein a great fire." The gentleman in black velvet led her through two more chambers, in the last of which was a state bed, with the curtains closely drawn. In this was a lady "lying in gret state," her face covered with "a vizer or a caul" (coif), and the gentleman promised Mrs. Barnes a great reward if the lady lived,

but certain death if evil befell her. He then went into the outer chamber, whither presently came the nurse with the child wrapped in her apron, and showing it to the gentleman, asked him for "provision of clothes to wrap it withal." But he "incontinently brought her to the fire-side, into the which fire he commanded her to cast the child, whereupon she kneeled down to him, desiring that he would not seek to destroy it, but rather give it to her, promising to keep it as her own, and be sworn never to disclose it; the which thing he would not yield unto, and forthwith the child was cast into the fire;" but, adds Mr. Bridges, who apparently took the deposition from the dying woman, and wrote it down afterwards from memory, "whether by him or her, or by them both, I do not perfectly remember"—an admission of possible inaccuracy which speaks strongly in favour of the genuineness of the document.

As this deposition was made eleven years before Darell's death, there would be strong presumption that Mr. Bridges, with whom he was on friendly terms, took no action in the matter, were not another document in existence which proves that the country was ringing with the horrible accusation. A short time since Canon Jackson found, among the Marquis of Bath's papers at Longleat, an original letter, written at the very time of Mrs. Barnes's deposition, by Sir Henry Knyvett, of Charlton, to Sir John Thynne.

"SIR HENRY KNYVETT, TO SIR JOHN THYNNE.

"SIR—I besetch you lett me crave so much favor of you, as to procure your servant, Mr. Bonham, most effectually to examine his sister, touching her usage at Willm. Dorrells, the birth of her children, how many there were, and what became of them. She shall have no cawse of feare trulie to confess the uttermost; for I will defende her from all perill howe so ever the case fall owte. The brute (report) of the murder of one of them increaseth fowlely, and theare falleth owto such other heighghous matter against him, as will toch him to the quick.

"From Charlton, this 11th of January, 1578.—Your loving friend,

"H. KNYVETT.

"To the right worshipful and my very loving friend, Sir John Thynne, Knyght, geve this."

This letter adds "damnable circumstan-

tiality" to the charge of murder, which must have been the trouble against which he sought the intercession of Lord Chancellor Bromley. Perhaps he obtained from his old friend Popham—for the price offered—the protection which his predecessor Bromley was chary of affording him. At any rate, whether as blood-money or not, Littlecote passed into the possession of Popham, Darell not being legally "seised" of it at the time of his death. On the occurrence of that event on the 1st of October, 1589, Popham, to whom the reversion had previously been made over, instantly took possession of the whole of the estate, and of the title-deeds in the house at Littlecote, by the hand of his agent William Rede. Of this there is no manner of doubt.

SUNFLOWERS.

THEY blossom brightly, straight and tall,
Against the mossy garden wall,
Beneath the poplar-trees;
The sunbeams kiss each golden face,
Their green leaves wave with airy grace,
In fresh September's breeze.

On one fair disc of gold and brown,
A purple butterfly lights down;
A sister-blossom yields
Her honey store, content to be
A late provider for the bee,
Flown here from clover fields.

Each dawning day, when climbs the sun,
And steadfast till his course is run,
These royal blossoms raise
Their grand, wide-opened, golden eyes,
To watch his journey through the skies,
Undaunted by his blaze.

The butterfly may sleep or soar,
The bee may steal their honey store,
But still the flowers gaze on,
With burning looks of changeless love,
Toward the day-god, high above,
Until the day is gone.

Fair maid beside the garden wall!
Thy lithe form copies, straight and tall,
The sunflower's stately grace:
The golden tresses of thine hair,
Like sunflower-rays do weave a fair
Bright halo round thy face.

And through their shadows looking down,
We find thine eyes of softest brown
Like sunflower-centres are;
We watch thee standing in the bloom,
The God-given sunflower of our home,
Yet meek as evening's star!

Ah, watching thus, high thoughts arise,
Deep thoughts, that fill our time-worn eyes
With fearful, hopeful tears.
God give thee sunshine on thy way!
God crown thy happy summer day
With peaceful autumn years!

In due time coming, on thy breast
Love's purple butterfly may rest,
And nestle close to thee;
And ere thy summer-time is o'er,
Thy sweetness may yield honey store,
For life's brown working-bee.

But evermore, though love should come
And fold his pinions in thine home,
Lift thy calm gaze above!
Mark thou the sunflower's constant eye,
And follow through life's changing sky,
The sun of faith and love.

UNLIMITED LOU'.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

WAS it really at Stafford House that Lon' had met the handsome young Spaniard, whose beautiful dark eyes had been bent with such deep but respectful admiration upon her majestic form, as he leaned against the imitation marble pillar on the opposite side of the room? Lou's memory was really so treacherous—and the young man seemed so certain about it—was so pleasantly incredulous as to any possibility of mistake with regard to the scene of such a never-to-be-forgotten incident. Of course, it must have been at Stafford House. And the dear duchess— But there! monsieur—yes, of course, Monsieur Quiensabe—would understand how difficult it was, moving as Lon' moved in the vortex of fashion. So many changes, you know; different places, new faces, and all that.

M. Quiensabe understood perfectly. Did not he too live in the same bewildering whirl? And besides—it was different. An insignificant individual like himself might well be forgotten or overlooked. Whereas—

What a very appreciative race these foreigners are! And with what delicacy they can express their appreciation. Such eyes, too! And such a lovely moustache; and oh, such exquisite little tiny patent-leather boots! Lon' did so admire a nice small foot—in a man.

Would she honour M. Quiensabe with her hand for the remainder of the dance? Yes, that she would. She did not often stand up, M. Quiensabe would understand. So very mixed, you know, these public dances. But with a friend of the dear marchi—duchess! That was quite different.

That was, indeed, a night of triumph for Louisa. It was not merely a quadrille through which her new partner had the honour of piloting her. By-and-by, as the short evening drew to a close—they do not dance after eleven o'clock at Kleine-Fussbad, where even the tables only remain open till half-past—M. Quiensabe suggested a brief visit to the refreshment-room, where Lon', never backward in accepting

a suggestion of that kind, made serious havoc among the cold fowls and gallantines, and lent no despicable aid towards the demolition of a foaming flask of Roderer's *carte blanche*. When they returned to the ball-room the violins were just breaking into *The Blue Danube*.

"Mademoiselle waltzes?"

"Oh, monsieur, really I——"

But M. Quiensabe was certain that mademoiselle must needs waltz, and waltz admirably. M. Quiensabe was as sure of mademoiselle's dancing as of having met her at Stafford House.

And on the whole the result, perhaps, was less disastrous than might have been anticipated. Perhaps the slight irregularity of measure which, despite the heroic efforts of the conductor, whose back was fortunately towards the waltzers, resulted from the desperate but wholly unsuccessful struggles of the wind instruments to preserve that gravity of demeanour so indispensably necessary for the production of coherent melody from wood or brass, may have had some effect in clearing the course for the performance. It is difficult to dance comfortably in time when flute and piccolo are constantly introducing ad libitum little trills in and out of season; when the ophicleide groans and gurgles irresponsibly at places not set down for it; or the cornet-à-pistons breaks all at once into a wild shriek of discordant triumph right in the middle of a bar. Poor Herr Tonart thought his musicians had gone suddenly mad, and smote his desk with his conducting-stick and stamped his angry foot in vain endeavours to beat out the time. The majority of the company recognised quickly enough the true state of the case, and left the floor to Lou' and her daring partner, who worked their way steadily on, gyrating from end to end of the apartment; slowly, indeed, but with a momentum which those only could fully appreciate by whom its weight was felt. Little Mrs. Mynniver—gliding along, of course, with her fair curls floating on the shoulder of the youngest English lad in the company—came in an unguarded moment across Lou's path, and was forthwith shot, by what her young monkey of a partner called "a straight drive for four," right on to one of the settees that lined the wall. One of the pretty white shoulders got an ugly bruise, and poor little Mrs. Mynniver, not at all consoled in her trouble by the ludicrous aspect under which her reckless young cavalier

persisted in regarding the *contretemps*, danced no more that evening. Lou' sailed away undisturbed and unconscious, her every energy absorbed in the serious task of holding on.

Suddenly Louisa gave a great hop, followed by a little cry, and clung to her partner with so serious an addition of weight as very nearly proved too much for his already seriously-taxed strength. With a supreme effort he managed to keep his feet, and the next moment Lou' was seated on the sofa, hot, breathless and—barefoot.

Poor Lou'! To be thus cut short in the very moment of supremest bliss. She could have found it in her heart to kick, into the very middle of the apartment, the treacherous big kid slipper whose overburthened sole now hung flapping from her heel by a single sandal. Only the cold touch of the polished oak floor reminded her that the integrity of her inner foot coverings was anything but irreproachable, and warned her against drawing attention to their defects.

It was nothing, she said. She must have trodden upon a loose board or something, and turned her ankle a little; but she was in no pain. If M. Quiensabe would only be kind enough to procure a *droschky* for her.

She would have got off in perfect safety had that miserable single sandal held but half-a-minute longer. As it was M. Quiensabe, returning from handing her tenderly into her *droschky*, found his friend, Count Carambole, glass in eye, in the middle of the hall, intently studying a portentous object lying there alone, gigantic, black, on the variegated flags.

It needed no words to explain to Quiensabe the direction of his friend's thoughts.

"Eh bien?" he demanded. "Q'en penses-tu?"

"Mon dieu!" replied the other with a shrug, "c'est clair."

"Je le crois bien. Noir—impair——"

"Et passe!"

"Parbleu!"

And the two worthies hurried off, to try their fortune on the indications afforded by Lou's lost sole.

That, however, did not prevent M. Quiensabe from calling, next day, to enquire after the strained foot. Lou' had been on the watch ever since breakfast, now peeping modestly from behind the curtain, now thrusting her head and as much as

the narrow window would permit of her broad shoulders, right out into the street in her anxiety for his coming.

At last he came, and as the dapper little boots made their way—not without more than one sotto voce “Carajo!” on the part of their wearer—up the steep and many stairs, Lou’s heart beat high with proud and hopeful anticipation. It beat more highly yet when, “of his own accord!” the wearer of the dapper boots and fascinating smile besought of her the privilege of escorting her at that afternoon’s music; and actually paraded her up and down the terrace for the entire hour and a half, the wonder and admiration of the whole society of Kleine-Fussbad.

And so for nearly a week things went on, and every day Lou’s heart beat higher, and her mighty foot paced the terrace with a prouder tread, by the side of her daily more and more devoted cavalier. Soon their stroll began to take a wider range. There was no greater stickler for the proprieties than Louisa Abbott, no one more easily shocked by any attempt, on the part of the junior members of society, to escape for a time from that strict chaperonage, which alone can divest the association of young people of opposite sexes of its innately objectionable character. But circumstances, as we all know, alter cases. And with a friend of the dear duchess too! Lou’ was quite satisfied by this time that the duchess of—let us see, not Stafford, is it? How unlucky that that tiresome peerage was left behind! But never mind—the dear duchess had personally commended M. Quiensabe to her especial confidence as a cavalier altogether sans reproche.

So Lou’ made but a very faint and brief resistance to M. Quiensabe’s proposal for a stroll in the pleasant and lonely woods that stretched away at the back of the Kursaal, or even to a tête-à-tête excursion to the ruins of Schwindelbach, a dozen miles off, in the solitary available pony-carriage of the place.

Indeed by this time it was looked upon by all Kleine-Fussbad as a settled thing. Of the fact of his devotion there could be no doubt; and Lou’, whose hopes had been by this time worked up to a state of absolute fever, felt as though the week-old courtship had been going on for months at least, and languished for the hour when her too diffident lover should muster up courage to speak.

Such was the position of affairs when,

one sultry afternoon, young Mordant burst into the Spielsaal with an impetuosity which sorely scandalised the grave chef-de-parti.

“Here, I say, you fellows! Come along! Here’s such a lark!”

“Be off, you confounded young monkey,” growled Sir Harry, deep in an exciting series; “they’ve no business to let boys like you into the place; no business at all, begad!”

Irreverent Jack made a face and turned upon me.

“Come along, you,” he cried, seizing me by the sleeve, and jerking a little pack of cards, with which I was busily elaborating a new development of my system, out of my hand on to the floor. “Never mind those things. They keep a fellow in cotton calves, you know, on purpose to pick things up.”

“Confound you, Jack!” I begin in my turn. But Jack is not to be confounded.

“Come now,” he cries, “you weren’t playing, and it’s ever so much better fun than this rotten old table.” So as Jack and I are really great friends, and as he has at all events effectually scattered my combinations for that time, I yield with as good a grace as I can muster, and depart with my young friend, just in time to escape the approaching chef-de-parti and save Jack the ignominy of expulsion.

“What is it, boy? Where are you going to take me?” I ask, as we regain the terrace. But Jack will not tell—only drags me on the faster towards the unfrequented part of the garden at the back of the Kursaal; arrived at which he draws me, with many injunctions to the profoundest silence, off the path on to the thick soft grass, till I find myself at length snugly ensconced among the bushes which shelter the back of the sequestered seat.

Decidedly your schoolboy has a code of honour of his own. The truth of the proposition is brought home to me with most unsatisfactory force, as I suddenly find me in the position of a very deliberate eavesdropper.

“You young rascal!” I exclaim below my breath. And then for a moment or two I give my mind to the consideration of what is best to be done. Remain there and listen I clearly cannot. Almost equally clear, upon very brief reflection, is the impossibility of giving any warning of our presence without being infallibly detected in a situation which could not possibly be accounted for in any honourable fashion.

Clearly the only plan is to beat a retreat again as "softly and suddenly" as we may, and accordingly I, in my turn, seize Master Jack by the collar, and whisper persuasively, "Come away, you young scamp, directly."

But Master Jack has not the least idea of coming away; on the contrary, sticks his tongue in his cheek, and resists vigorously. Anything like a struggle and we are betrayed. Master Jack must be left to his own devices. So, loosening my hold upon his collar, and shaking my fist at him in a perfectly impotent denunciation of his conduct, which arouses that young gentleman's glee, and very nearly results in a catastrophe, I watch my opportunity and steal away, happily undetected.

Meanwhile, however, the conversation upon the other side of the bushes has been progressing.

"You've used me very badly, monsieur," poor Lou' was saying, as I just realised the situation, and a huge sob had emphasised the reproach.

"Ah, mademoiselle," replied Quiensabe, with a sigh which, if not quite so vast, was almost as profound, "ah, mademoiselle, and do not I too suffer?"

"Oh, stuff and nonsense!" returned the weeping damsel, her wrath evidently for the moment getting the better of her emotion; "I don't believe you care for me one bit."

"Mademoiselle!"

"Oh, it's all very fine turning up your eyes and—and— There, go away, do. I hate the very sight of you."

"I go, mademoiselle. Adieu for ever!"

But Lou', it seemed, could not after all so easily part with her faithless lover.

"Stop!" she cried; and M. Quiensabe stopped with as much promptitude as though he really had never thought of going. "Oh! monsieur—monsieur—Alphonse! Do you really—really—love me?"

"Mademoiselle!" answered Alphonse in his most thrilling tones, "can you ask me?"

"And you really think if you had this money you could——"

"Ah, mademoiselle—Louise! May I say Louise? Why tantalise your distracted Alphonse with the thought? If I had it! Why now is the very opportunity I have so long sought. Since yesterday morning there has not come a zero—not one. If I had the money now—not six months hence, when I shall be count and rich—ah! yes, rich to millions—when it is too late—but

now, here, to lay on this table—this evening—ah! mon dieu! then—then——"

Shall I confess that, for the moment, I could almost have found it in my heart to wish that my own code of honour were framed on the easy lines which bounded Master Jack's? But virtue prevailed. The last words I heard as I stole cautiously from my unintentional ambush, were:

"But, monsieur, it is such a heap of money!" And so I left the interesting struggle between love and prudence still undecided in Lou's maiden breast, and returned to my interrupted calculations at the Kursaal.

I was not, however, to remain long in doubt as to its issue. On my way home that evening to the table d'hôte I called in at the solitary local jeweller's, for a pencil-case I had left to be mended.

"See then, monsieur!" exclaimed that too-persuasive individual as I entered the shop. "If monsieur desires to lay out some portion of his benefice in a cadeau that shall be truly worthy even of the beauty of madame, behold it here."

And M. Quincaille holds out to me an old morocco case, which he opens and submits triumphantly for my inspection.

Lou's "pearls!"

That evening I had a call to make on my way to the Kursaal. My road lay through the Dreckstrasse, and as I passed I glanced up at the well-known window. A dim light burned in the room, and a vast shadow passed restlessly backwards and forwards, across the yellow screen which served for a blind. As I looked it stopped; the screen was pulled hastily on one side, and Lou's head appeared.

"Monsieur! is it you—Alphonse?"

"Good night, Miss Abbott!" I replied, and the head vanished swiftly without a word.

It was late before I finally reached the Kursaal, for the friend on whom I was calling had an uncle leaving for England by the night mail, and I walked up to the station with them to see him off. As the train moved out of the station, I half fancied I recognised a face that peered for a moment from one of the first-class carriage windows; but Harry Golding, having discharged his mission, was eager to be off to have a fling at the black and red; so without further thought I followed him promptly into the nearest droschky, and we rattled off to the Kursaal.

The window in the Dreckstrasse was dark as we passed it this time, but on the terrace was a tall, dark figure pacing to and fro, and every now and then stopping a moment to gaze eagerly into the face of some departing gambler as he passed down the steps on his way home. It fell back into the shadow as our carriage drew up, but, as I entered the hall, I looked back, and saw it again flit past, while the light of the lamps fell upon a broad white face which seemed, if possible, more sallow and less lovely even than usual.

Within the play-room there was rather more than the customary crowd. Someone had been playing high and successfully, and round the end of the roulette-table was gathered a little mob of spectators, watching his play with admiring, not to say envious eyes. As I approached, I saw the broad white face peering in through one of the lower panes. But the throng round the table quite prevented anything from being seen; and with a look of angry impatience it vanished once more.

"Messieurs ! faites le jeu."

The game proceeds. The successful player—a tall broad-shouldered Englishman with a blonde beard and a pleasant smile, who has evidently never played before—throws his notes and his rouleaux here and there at random or caprice, and laughs joyously as he rakes in with firm but by no means dextrous hand the gains that seem to follow as a matter of course, place his stake where he may. Half-a-dozen knowing punters back the new player's luck to the full extent of their available resources, and profit accordingly. The president of the administration, awaiting the moment when the conclusion of the "trois derniers coups" shall call upon him to superintend the calculation of profit and loss for the day, casts somewhat anxious glances at the clock, as he watches the latter mounting up with such terrible swiftness. The employés are raking in and counting out at their topmost speed, and the whole busy but silent scene enacting with even more than its usual absorbing energy, when suddenly a tall figure, never before seen in that unhallowed apartment, though familiar enough to everyone there, comes striding in, and makes its way up to the table.

For a moment even the employés themselves look up from their monotonous occupation, and a significant glance passes from one to another among them. Kleine-Fussbad is a small place, and its limited

current of news circulates fast. Moreover, the staff of the tables is recruited entirely from the ranks of the local tradespeople—or, to speak perhaps more correctly, the trade of Kleine-Fussbad is altogether in the hands of the Messieurs de la Roulette, &c., who eke out the more than modest pittance of their calling by supplying boots, gloves, wood-carvings, small articles of jewellery, and huge china pipes, to such as have money to spare for these trifles.

It was the jeweller who had that very evening offered me Lou's pearls, who was at this moment on duty in the temporary absence of the regular chef-de-parti, and to him the bewildered damsel, after a startled glance round the table, addressed herself.

"Où est mossiou ?"

"Monsieur——?" replied the high jeweller, with a polite shrug of interrogation.

"Vous savvy biang qui je vous dire," answered Lou', whose French was, on the whole, more voluble than correct. "Mossiou Quiensabe—où est il ? Dites moa toot sweete ?"

But M. Quincaille was unable to afford the desired information. M. Quiensabe was not in the room—that mademoiselle could see for herself—nor had he been there that evening.

"Vous montay !" cried Lou', a cold perspiration breaking out visibly on her pale face. "Mossiou came here to play at nine o'clock."

But M. Quincaille still shrugged, and shook his head. He was desolated to be forced to contradict mademoiselle, but he had himself never left the salle since eight hours, and monsieur had decidedly not entered.

Suddenly the thought occurred to me of the face I had seen in the railway carriage. I knew now whose face it was.

"I can tell you where M. Quiensabe is, Miss Abbott," I said. "We saw him leave by the Frankfurt express at half-past nine."

Poor Lou' stared at me for a moment with the small round eyes opened to their utmost extent, and the big mouth gasping like the mouth of a stranded fish. Then, suddenly, with a sort of cry, she turned swiftly round upon the unsuspecting M. Quincaille, who was exchanging at that moment a half-smile of appreciation with his next-door neighbour in the inspector's high chair on the other side of the table.

"My pearls! Give me back my pearls!" she cried, and seizing the poor little man by the throat with her powerful hands, she shook him as though she thought he had swallowed the missing jewels, and had a mind to shake them up again.

It was not without considerable difficulty that the unfortunate jeweller, half strangled and panting with rage and fright, was rescued from her clutches; and then Lou' went off into a fit of screaming hysterics, in the midst of which she was at length carried bodily off by the combined exertions of six stalwart footmen, and the interrupted play was resumed.

The next morning a stern and tightly-buttoned official arrived in the Dreckstrasse, armed with a polite invitation to the Fräulein Abbott, of England, to change her residence to some other town. But he was too late; Lou' had already departed. She had not much packing to do—less now, indeed, than ever, for not only the pearls but even the silver teapot, and cream-jug, and spoons had all found their way into the hands of M. Quineaille to supply the funds for that infallible martingale which, after all, as it appeared, M. Quinsabe had forgotten to play before he started. By the very first train that morning Lou' was en route. Whither she went, or what has become of her, I am not in a position to say. My private opinion is that she is still chasing her fugitive lover. Should she ever catch him, I think we shall be pretty sure to hear of it.

I know what has become of "her pearls" though, for I saw little Mrs. Mynniver wearing them only the other night.

BOWMEN AND BOWWOMEN.

Is archery only a languid survival of the picturesque past, or can it honestly be described as a vigorous institution in the present? Fifteen or twenty years ago it seemed to have a flourishing and eventful future. New toxophilite societies sprang up in all parts of England; old and decayed associations experienced a fashionable renaissance; purveyors of bows, arrows, and all the appurtenances thereto appertaining began to do a very brisk business. The annual meetings of the Grand National were events in social history, and the provincial capitals which that corporation of bowmen and bowwomen deigned to visit, year after year, duly appreciated the honour bestowed upon them. But archery was not destined

to enjoy its popularity without challenge or competition. Croquet sprang up. Lawns, smooth as billiard-tables, became the fashion of the day, and the click of the boxwood balls was loud in the land. Yet croquet did not, after all, very seriously interfere with archery. The votaries of the two pursuits moved in different planes; and, as for its relations to archery, croquet was only a popularised edition of the good old English game of bowls. In the last two or three years croquet and archery have had to encounter one and the same rival. Croquet may be said to have already disappeared before it. Archery contrives to hold its own, or if it has lost something of its popularity and prestige, still exists as a national institution. The name of this rival is lawn-tennis—quite the most successful pastime which recent years have seen.

The truth is that what is pre-eminently the spirit of toxophilism is essentially different from what must be recognised as the spirit of the age. There is an absence of excitement about the pastime, save to those who have acquired much love for, and not a little proficiency in it, which ill accords with modern taste. As an opportunity for flirtation it is inferior to croquet; as an exercising game it is not to be compared to lawn tennis. It is essentially the pursuit of the middle-aged; of the placid disposition, which finds its delight in small things; of the meditative mind; of the philosopher of the peripatetic school. It bears the same relation to more active sports that angling does to hunting. It requires a patience and an infinite capacity for taking pains, as well as a power of being satisfied with small results, which is very rare at the present day. An indifference to failure, and steady perseverance, are indispensable requisites to the disciple of Ascham.

An archery meeting is a picturesque spectacle enough, but it is devoid of that sound and excitement which abound at the fête champêtre where lawn-tennis is the pastime of the hour. The targets are pitched in a pleasant meadow, under the shadow of some northern mountain, or, it may be, with the breezes sweeping over it, fresh and pure from some western sea. The occasion, let us suppose, is not that of a special prize day, but of an ordinary weekly meeting. There is no hum of talk in the air, but the spirit of criticism and competition is abroad. The toxophilites, one after another, take their

place at the point where they shoot, and make their aim at the opposite target. The only sound is the welcome, delicate thud of the arrow as it hits the mark, and, piercing the painted canvas, buries its point in the straw. When the bowmen have finished the bowwomen advance, and when the contingent apportioned to each target has discharged its quota of arrows there is a murmur of rustling dresses and of various talk, as the company en masse progresses to take its stand at the opposite targets, and there to examine the results of each one's prowess. This latter is a business requiring the greatest nicety, and quite sure not to be conducted without some difference of opinion, and it may be acrimony. The marker is called upon to decide whether an arrow, which has impinged upon the target on the border line of red and gold, entitles its proprietor to claim the superior colour. He, or she, is entreated with much importunity to be guilty of no errors of omission or commission in crediting competitors with shots; and well will it be if, when the shooting of the day is over, and the final declaration of the score announced, the archers find that the account kept by this same marker tallies exactly with that which they have kept themselves.

When the Archery Club holds its annual gala-day there is more in the way of variety and fun. Prizes of all kinds are to be shot for, and the neighbourhood is en fête. The spectators, who, on ordinary practice days, are mostly limited to the mothers and duennas of the young ladies, comprise representatives of the county families and the most considerable of the townfolk. Diana has donned the new uniform of the club—a white dress with green trimmings. As the hour of lunch draws on, a dense belt of onlookers girds the shooters on every side. Beyond are the carriages, the tents of various sizes; the pavilion yonder is the clubhouse, and there the midday meal is served. When the labours of the day are done there ensues a momentous interval. The scores are being made up. Presently a gentleman, the honorary secretary, who is in all probability a clergyman, is seen to emerge from the solitude in which he has performed his calculations. At once he becomes the centre of an expectant throng. There is much suspense and just a little heart-burning. The distribution of prizes follows; next comes a space allotted for dinner, or rather for the meal known as high tea, and “the day's proceedings,” to

use the language of the report in the local newspapers, “terminated with a dance, which the votaries of Terpsichore greatly enjoyed.”

The character of these bow-meetings varies as much as the individual science displayed at them; but where once an archery-club has been organised, even in a neighbourhood where the pastime has been hitherto unknown, it is astonishing how soon it is conducted in a real business-like spirit. The chief mover in the matter is most likely the clergyman already mentioned. Perhaps he is an old Wykehamist, and acquired a knowledge of archery in the gardens of New College; perhaps he is a late importation from some parish of Devon, or Warwick, or Yorkshire, which is also a capital of toxophilism. The ecclesiastic is very frequently an eminent expert with the bow. He has also a reputation as a humorist, and “between the ends,” when the toxophilite host is passing and repassing to and from the targets, his jokes and facetiæ excite a ripple of laughter, which is felt as a relief from the “rigour of the game.” He is generally a beneficed divine, and, as often as not, a diocesan inspector of schools. He has no very strongly-pronounced theological views, but generally believes in the doctrine of good-fellowship, and thinks that it is not the least part of his duty to bring his flock agreeably together on social and secular occasions. He is upwards of fifty years of age, and is the father of a daughter who is the lady-paramount of the society. His style of shooting, which is worth a moment's glance, in order that it may serve as a standard of comparison for others, is as cheery and genial as his social bearing and conversation. The reverend gentleman is a remarkably good shot, seldom failing to get two arrows out of three into the target. But he does it all in so easy and careless a style that he conveys the impression of one who succeeds by accident. His attitude in shooting is not elegant, and his manner is pronounced by experts to be irredeemably bad. He is rather round-shouldered, and, when he is taking aim, he seems to have no neck to speak of. Yet somehow he contrives to give an uncommonly good account of himself; and the half-pay officers and professional gentlemen, who are his rivals, wonder what is the secret of his power.

The cleric has just scored a bull's-eye with his last arrow, and we look to see what sort of a man is his successor. A

dignified gentleman this, with a pleasant, placid smile, well-chiselled features, and an exceedingly quiet manner. He has only settled in the neighbourhood recently, and his antecedents are somewhat of a mystery. His life is that of a recluse, and there is a vague sort of impression that he has never recovered from some unfortunate attachment formed early in life, and that he is now consoling himself with the studies and occupations of a mediæval alchemist. He talks little. His manner is courteous and well-bred, and his conversation pithy and pertinent. But there is an absence of anything like cordiality in the relations which exist between him and the rest of the company. He is a *homme incompris*, the local Sphinx, whose solution is the despair of the neighbourhood.

There are other types in our archery-field, which must not be overlooked, of the clerical variety, both like and unlike the active, brisk, good-natured honorary secretary at whom we first glanced. There is a gentleman yonder, a clergyman of the old school, belonging to a species that is almost extinct in these realms. He is a strong Churchman of the approved constitutional order, supremely intolerant of the opinion of others, yet good-hearted, tender, true. He believes, in his secret soul, that no quarter can be given to those who differ from any of his views in matters appertaining to Church or State. He thinks that Radicalism is the source of all mischief, social, political, and moral. He is honestly persuaded that Dissenters are schismatics of the most dangerous description, and that the temples in which they worship are hotbeds of national disaffection. But his life is better than his creed, and his dogmatic rigidity is only a speculative peculiarity, which does not find expression in outward acts. His costume has little priestly about it—a swallow-tail coat of archaic cut, gray waistcoat and trousers, black tie, and a knowing little cap of Lincoln green on his brow. He is an enthusiast in the sport of archery to the backbone. He admires it because it is of ancient origin. He is persuaded that the secret of the successful practice of the art has been in great measure lost. He is a fair shot himself, but he does not shoot quite as frequently now as formerly. He has tried a few rounds to-day, but at the present moment he is a critic and spectator only. Look at him, for he is worthy of study. He is ready to explain to anyone, lady or gentleman, neophyte or expert, how the bow should be held, and at what angle the arrow

discharged, and he will dilate with the same brusque fervour against new-fangled toxophilite modes, as he would if he were dwelling on the abominations of Nonconformity, or the heresies of political reformers.

Time would fail us if we were to exhaust the contents of our portrait gallery of bowmen. There is the retired Indian officer, whose income is limited, and whose family expenses are growing, and who has taken up archery, because it gives him something to do, without much to pay for it. He is by no means fanatically devoted to the sport. He shoots away doggedly, and in silence, and he is perhaps rather less bored when he is thus occupied than at other times. Indeed, he has grown fond of it, and takes a considerable pride in his extremely creditable scores. You may see him, when the morning is fine, sallying forth unaccompanied, and feeing the attendant at the field to erect a couple of targets, by way of stealing a march upon his rivals. Sometimes, on these expeditions, he finds to his annoyance that he is not alone. There is a maiden lady, a member of the club, who is the colonel's particular aversion. She too is ambitious of toxophilite honours, and hearing that the veteran Indian warrior is in the habit of taking time by the forelock, she determines to employ her spare hours in a similar manner. The colonel has not yet lost the instincts of the military gallant, but he cannot tolerate this obtrusive old maid. The younger ladies of the association do not stir abroad thus early, and there is nothing to break the shock of the encounter. In the afternoon or evening, when the regular shooting is in full swing, the colonel relates to one of the gentlemen, who also patronise the club, and with whom he is on what may almost be called terms of friendship—the doctor, or the lawyer, or the retired professional man—the persecution of which he has been the victim. He does this with perfect, even with sombre gravity. His friend may smile, but the colonel's smiling days are over; he only wants to kill time, and he has taken to archery. The liveliest members of the ordinary country archery-club will be found to be the gentlemen who have spent the larger portion of their lives afloat. There is no end to the jokes which the retired captains of the Royal Navy and the jolly admirals will crack.

In most of these clubs there is sure to be a fair proportion of tolerable shooting, and of general influences socially advan-

tageous. It is this latter consideration which ensures them the measure of support that they derive from the clergy. The archery-field does for a mixed assemblage of gentlemen and ladies what the hunting-field does for the former. It brings them together; it teaches them to know each other; it is an opportunity of intercourse which rubs off angles both with individuals and classes. Lawn-tennis may be a successful rival of archery for the young; but as an institution, archery has little to fear from it. The royal toxophilites in the Regent's-park may not be so prosperous or popular a community as formerly, but it is a good sign that in the suburbs of London, as well as of Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool, archery holds its own. Our merchants, traders of all kinds, lawyers, and their families, when they have once achieved a fair measure of proficiency—an achievement which involves, as has been said above, not a little of patient, assiduous application—find that the pastime is one, which lawn-tennis and other games may supplement but cannot replace. In the fortunes of archery-clubs in more rural neighbourhoods there is naturally considerable fluctuation. They are here, prospering, to-day, and on the morrow they are gone. Social jealousies invade them, and, when that is the case, the disintegrating influence has commenced. Provincial Dianas are morbidly susceptible of any slight, and are woefully lacking in the virtue of perseverance. They cannot tolerate repeatedly figuring at the bottom of the scoring-list. They are quick to detect the presence of a favouritism which is purely imaginary, and quite impossible. They find it inconvenient to meet each other at the same target. When this sort of thing spreads it is the beginning of the end. Anything will serve to hasten the decay of the society. But more frequent and more effective, even than the operation of these petty jealousies and spites, in its fatal influence to the toxophilite organisations of the provinces, is the departure from the neighbourhood of the families or individuals who have been their chief stay and support. When once the leading spirit has gone, the thing is as good as over. The shooting gets more and more careless, the meetings become irregular, till, finally, the society is formally dissolved, and its property put up to the auctioneer's hammer.

There are at present in England rather more than a hundred archery-clubs doing moderately well, the midland and the

western counties being the places in which they most flourish. The standard of shooting is not quite as high as it was ten years ago, and on the whole the performances of the bowmen are decidedly distanced by those of the bowwomen. The highest score ever made since the Grand National Archery Meetings commenced in 1844 was by the gentleman whose proficiency with the bow and arrow has probably never been surpassed, Mr. H. A. Ford. This gentleman, who was champion of England from 1850 to 1860, marked in 1857 at Cheltenham the total of one thousand two hundred and fifty-one. Previously, in 1854, he had made one thousand and forty-five at Shrewsbury; and subsequently, in 1858, he made one thousand and seventy-six at Exeter. Last year the champion score was only seven hundred and seventy-three. Some idea of the localities in which archery thrives or has thriven most may be formed from the fact, that the great annual reunion of toxophilites has been held four times since its establishment at York; four times also at Leamington, and as frequently at Cheltenham; thrice at Derby; twice at Shrewsbury, Exeter, Bath; once at Edinburgh, Liverpool, Worcester, Birmingham, Hereford, and Winchester. The principle on which the managers of this meeting have gone, has been to select a part of England in which a taste for archery existed, and to choose a particular town—first, with an eye to its accommodation; secondly, with an eye to the opportunity offered to it of maturing and fostering local efforts. The society, we are also told, “helps to establish a kind of brotherhood among associations, some of whom, being in the remotest corners of the country, would scarcely otherwise be heard of out of their own respective districts.” In other cases, again, where a society may be languishing, and it is desirable to impart to it an impetus, the assembly of renowned bowmen and bowwomen has the effect of endowing it with fresh life and vigour.

In these days of centenary and other commemorative festivals, it is worth mentioning that the revival of archery, as a modern, social pastime, is exactly one hundred years old. It was in 1777 that Mr. Waring, “the father of modern archery,” as he is generally styled, was recommended to try the bow as a means of expanding a contracted chest. Sir Ashton Lever invited him to pitch his target in the gardens of Leicester House. In a very little time Mr. Waring's example was fol-

lowed by others—Sir Ashton Lever himself among the number; and, in 1780, a toxophilite society was formed. George the Fourth, then Prince of Wales, lent his patronage to the movement, and there is a well-known picture of His Royal Highness in the costume of Captain-General of the Royal Kent Archers—a society which sprang up into existence a little afterwards. Before Mr. Waring's time, there were only four archery societies, all of them in the north of England, and all organisations having an historical and antiquarian rather than a practical interest. In less than a decade after the founding of the Royal Toxophilites of Leicester House, upwards of fifty associations formed after the same model sprang up in different parts of England. Early in the present century these figures were nearly doubled. Two societies there are, which should be named as presenting a connecting link between ancient and modern bowmanship—the Royal Edinburgh Bowmen, and the Richmond (Yorkshire) Archers. The former of these lay claim by Royal Charter to the curious privilege of acting as the body-guard of the reigning sovereign, whenever he or she approaches within five miles of their metropolis. When George the Fourth visited Scotland, this privilege was asked for, and was granted. For more than two centuries, without the omission of a single year, the Edinburgh Bowmen have held a toxophilite competition for the silver arrow. As for the progress made by archery within the limits of the present century, there are two places which should not remain unmentioned—Hatfield House and Grove House, Camberwell, the latter the home of a lady who was one of the social queens of her generation, Mrs. Crespigny. It is the influence and example of a society with which Mrs. Crespigny and the first Marchioness of Salisbury were closely connected—the Archers of Arden—which have called bowwomen in addition to bowmen into existence, and have served materially to increase the charm and utility of the sport.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY. CHAPTER VIII. ÉMEUTE.

THE ball had been set rolling, but it rolled very slowly—at first.

A dreary wintry morning, pitilessly cold,

and the rain falling heavily. The streets have a deserted look. I am inclined to think that I have risen too early; that the Revolution is still in bed and asleep. It is very dark, there is to be no sunshine to-day. Dusky shadows are to be discerned at the corners of the streets, with here and there the smouldering embers of bivouac fires. Wrapped in their gray cloaks, troops of cavalry are on guard with naked sabres resting on their shoulders. Men and horses alike look weary and woe-begone, pinched with cold and hunger; they shiver audibly. They have been under arms and unrelieved for many hours.

"Qui vive?" I am challenged.

"Un ami: France," I say at a venture.

"Passe au large." I keep at a most respectful distance.

I am on my way to the Rue St. Benoît. I meet many soldiers in squads, companies, regiments; and mounted officers, bearing orders and counter-orders, are galloping hither and thither very furiously, after their manner; but of revolutionists I see none, beyond a few straggling groups of blouses.

I find that M. Guichardet has only just returned to his sixth floor. He has been on guard all night, he tells me; at a barricade, I suspect. He looks tired and is very muddy, but he is in excellent spirits. He smokes a pipe while Madame Guichardet—for so I decide she is to be called—boils a coffee-pot. Her costume is still incomplete—has been hurriedly assumed; but she is a very clever woman. In a very few minutes she has prepared for the painter a most dainty and savoury breakfast, which he entreats me to share with him. Meanwhile Madame Guichardet sets to work and cleans his musket. I notice that portraits and studies of the lady in various postures grace the walls of the studio. Some of these artistic efforts I feel sure that Mr. Leveridge would much admire and enjoy.

"All goes well," M. Guichardet informs me. "You think there is no difference between to-day and yesterday?—wait a little. The troops are discontented; their task resembles that of Sisypheus—as fast as they roll down the stones of the barricades the people roll them up again. The National Guard has assembled, legion by legion. The king has such faith in his National Guards! He believes that he has won their hearts and made sure of their bayonets by shaking hands now and then with a sergeant, or tweaking the ear of a corporal—a caricature of the manner of

Le Petit Caporal. He is deceived. In truth he has duped many, but he is himself the greatest dupe of all. The National Guard is but another barricade between the people and the soldiery. From behind the shelter of the National Guard we shall simply demolish the monarchy. And to-day, bear in mind, the people are armed. Last night every gunsmith's in Paris was stripped of its weapons. Let us go into the streets again."

It was only an *émeute* as yet; it was assuming grander proportions, however, a more and more portentous aspect.

I was led into the fastness of the insurgents, the centre of the city, the burning, angry heart of Paris. Here were mustered the veterans of revolution, disciplined rebels, skilled in the conflicts of the streets, prepared to die for the Republic. They combined the courage of patriots with the ferocity of wild beasts. In a congress of narrow and tortuous streets, defended at every point by barricades of elaborate construction, they had secured an impregnable position and established a stronghold of insurrection. To dislodge them seemed impossible; any attack upon them must involve cruel sacrifice of life. It was clear that they were resolved, if need arose, to die the martyrs of their cause, but none the less to sell their lives very dearly. With heads uncovered, or protected only by coloured handkerchiefs rudely knotted, with throats and chests bare, save only where their long, thick, dusty beards veiled them, they stood at their posts, blackened with gunpowder, soiled with mire, drenched with rain, their muskets tucked beneath their arms to keep the locks dry, silently and calmly fierce, awaiting the general rising of the nation or the onset of the troops. Ruffians they might be, but they were heroes also; their faith, their fortitude, their enthusiasm, their desperation redeeming and even ennobling them.

The barricades, erected with extraordinary rapidity—for sometimes the troops, hurrying to the attack of one of these obstructions, found another rising quickly in their rear, so that they seemed trapped in a *cul-de-sac*—were composed, as may be conceived, of the first materials that came to hand; paving-stones piled high upon each other, trunks of trees, an overturned cab or omnibus, furniture borrowed from the adjoining houses, barrels, scaffolding-poles, a shop-front or two, mounds of earth, and a bristling array of iron railings.

They appeared to be of loose construction, to be amassed without much art or system; and yet they were the most approved means of revolt. They rendered the action of cavalry impossible, while the infantry found themselves confronted by stone walls, pierced with loopholes, from which destruction was dealt out in the most prompt and absolute manner. Even the capture of a barricade, after severe effort and deplorable bloodshed, was little removed from a disaster—led only to mortifying results—yet another barricade had risen in its rear. The progress of the army was again obstructed, it was still exposed to a deadly fire.

I saw now rebellious Paris, ragged Paris, and pauper and wretched Paris—constituents of the city not usually coming under the notice of visitors—gathered under the shadow of the red flag, behind the barricades. Even women and children, half clad, or in the thinnest and scantiest of clothes, had joined the forces that were at war with order and "the social compact," for what had these done for them? They were busy making cartridges, or filling baskets of stones, to stop the crevices of the barricades or to hurl at the soldiery. Poor, desperate outcasts, it seemed that a revolution was very necessary to right them, or to mend in some fashion their state by changing it. Could one wonder that they held nothing short of a revolution to be of avail? For how could they benefit, although one Prime Minister did make way for another, although Guizot yielded to Molé, and Molé to Thiers, and Thiers to Barrot?

The weather was miserable. It was curious how little the insurgents seemed to regard it.

"C'est le ciel qui se charge aujourd'hui des rafraîchissements," said an insurgent, cheerily, as he drank from his cassette full of rain-water.

"It was different in the days of July," observed a veteran rebel; "it was so hot then, one could not bear oneself. We had to ask citizens to water the pavement in front of their houses. It burnt one's feet like red-hot plates, as though we were bears that were learning to dance."

Occasional firing was to be heard, but the sounds ceased as the short day came to its close. Now and then troops of cavalry, waving their sabres, charged down the open streets. A *porte-cochère* suddenly opening while they swept past, I was glad to take refuge under the shadow of the archway.

The day was over and the night had fallen. It was not clear that the revolt was gaining upon the Government, or that the Government had made any serious impression upon the revolt.

But an impression pervaded generally that all was over; that peace and order had been restored. A report spread that the unpopular Ministry had been dismissed; the electoral law was to be reformed; there was to be a new Chamber of Deputies, purged and regenerate, in harmony with the wishes of the people, the spirit of the nation. The Revolution was more than ever like a holiday spectacle. Shouts of applause echoed along the boulevards; the chief streets were aglow with illuminations. Monarch and people were reunited, were joyous and happy as reconciled lovers.

"Wait," whispered M. Guichardet; "the last word has not been spoken, nor the last shot fired."

If Paris retired to rest in a good temper it awoke in a rage. The king, it was said, had hesitated—was still hesitating. Nothing was settled. Much valuable time had been wasted. Hours passed; the troops showed symptoms of exhaustion and disaffection; they had been long without food; the people were forming themselves into columns of attack. At length a proclamation containing terms of peace was hurriedly posted on the walls; but it lacked a signature. It was received with derision.

"I have a message to you from Alexis," said M. Guichardet.

"He has news of Paul?"

"Yes. Paul Riel is in Paris."

"When and where can I see him?"

"One moment. Paul Riel is a brave man, but it seems he has suffered much. He was arrested at Abbeville on his road to Paris. His passport was taken from him; his pockets were emptied; he was flung into prison. He was suspected, that was all. Well, he is a brave man, as I said. He made his own escape from prison, and started on foot for Paris—he was penniless. He has suffered much, I repeat. He has begged his way, fought his way—he is now amongst us. He mounted guard last night on one of the barricades of the Temple. But——" he hesitated.

"You mean that he is ill?"

"My friend, I mean that he has undergone great privation. His mind has yielded—the shock has been too great for him."

"He is mad?"

"He is not himself. All seems a blank to him. He has forgotten everything; he failed to recognise Alexis. He is possessed by one idea; that he is a conspirator, at war with the Government. This state of frenzy may pass away—but do not deceive yourself—his condition is deplorable—he is grievously ill."

"I may see him?"

"Alexis will inform you further by-and-by."

This was distressing news to send to Doris. Caution was very necessary; something I must withhold from her. I informed her briefly that I had heard of Paul but had not seen him, that he had been ill, and consequently unable to communicate with her. I promised to write fully on the subject a day or two later. I did not dare to be more explicit while I felt that the scantiness of my tidings must needs disappoint her greatly.

Was there to be another night like the last? It was wet and drear and dark. There was no glow of illuminations in the streets; nothing had occurred to lighten the hearts of the people. The crowds in the main thoroughfares were as dense as ever, but they wore an air of dejection, they were grimly morose of aspect. Something more of organisation they had acquired: they now marched like troops. Many carried pikes and sabres, some waved aloft lighted torches. It was, in part, a mere Reform demonstration; in part, an attacking force. They proceeded, as it seemed, upon a distinct plan; they were under the command of appointed officers, were led by a man carrying a red flag. Advancing in three columns from separate quarters they united into a compact force, and clearing a pathway through the multitude of idlers assembled in the neighbourhood of the Café Tortoni, bore down upon the Hotel of Foreign Affairs. With what object?

As yet the strife between the Government and people had been carried on after a somewhat lukewarm fashion. There had been indignation on both sides, with some anger perhaps, but there had been no fury, no cry of havoc, no eager longing for absolute vengeance. There had been political division rather than civil war. The king was not so much hated as he was despised. His Ministers were most unpopular. It was understood, however, that they were likely to be dismissed and duly succeeded in office by the Opposition, in the usual constitutional way.

But an émeute in France has always contained a strong revolutionary leaven. The mutineers of the moment are joined forthwith by the life-long rebels, with whom insurrection is an institution, an increasing occupation. In monarchical Paris, the Republic has been ever at hand, prompt to come when called for, like a cab on a stand. The peace once broken, there were many eager to widen the breach, and through it let slip the dogs of war.

What was now needed was provocation, an end of the abstinence and the self-control hitherto maintained on either side. It came in the savage fusillade of the Boulevard des Capucins on the night of the 23rd February.

The army of the people fronted the bayonets of the soldiery. Then an accident—the chance firing of a pistol, or a signal given by an insurgent to awaken his comrades to their task of revolt—and the troops yielded to a panic, the whole line of infantry opened fire. The roar and the crackle of musketry echoed and re-echoed among the lofty buildings of the district. The knell of French monarchy had sounded; the Revolution had commenced in earnest, was indeed completed.

A hurried rush of the terror-stricken to the shelter of the by-street, the archways and portals of the adjoining houses; the frightened screams of the flying women and children; the groans of the wounded, writhing in mortal agony and deluging the miry roadway with their blood; the hoarse cries of indignation, of fury, and of vengeance—the swaying torches shed lurid light upon a terrible scene. The soldiers shrink back appalled at the crime, the blunder they have committed. The crowd plunges now this way, now that, seeking escape from further attack. Horrible reports are circulated of systematic massacres of the people—of the like scenes of outrage and bloodshed occurring on the other boulevards. Cries arise on all sides: “Nous sommes trahis! On nous assassine! Aux armes! Vengeons nos frères! Vengeance!”

The sudden retreat of the crowd had flung me on to a doorstep.

“You are not hurt?” demanded Guichardet, who had tightly gripped my arm. “It was infamous. The cowards! I have a scratch on the cheek which bleeds, a

trifle only, but I heard plainly the whistle of the bullet as it flew past to lodge in the breast of the man behind me, who fell back dead. Ah! do you hear that?”

There was great rattling of musketry at some little distance—the quick interchange of fire of hostile forces. Now the irregular shots of skirmishers, then the more regular sounds of platoon and volley firing. But even more alarming and exciting was the prolonged ringing of the tocsin, its deep-toned booming interrupted by the shrill hurried notes of a smaller bell, which continued for many hours, and bore to all parts of Paris and its environs tidings of terror. It was a night of dreadful sounds. Drums beat incessantly, and fires crackled in the streets; the people continued to cry for vengeance, or to shout in chorus revolutionary songs; the pickaxe and the crowbar were busily at work tearing up the roads; great stones were being noisily rolled this way and that to construct the barricades of to-morrow’s battles, which all were eagerly looking forward to.

“Ça ira!” said Guichardet. “This way!”

He stumbled over an obstacle in his path. It was the body of a man.

“Dead?” he said, interrogatively, and he stooped to examine.

“Mon Dieu!” he cried. “I said you should have further news of Paul Riel, but I did not look for this. Behold him!”

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VIII. AUS LINDENHEIM.

It was quite true that Walter Gordon found himself incapable of doing what he thought justice to the prima donna. It must have been owing to the painter's want of skill; but that was not for him to believe. And his failure, whatever the cause, made him think about her doubly. He did not think less of herself, but more of her. And so the drive over to Deepweald with Lord Quorne was not particularly lively. The earl was thinking about cucumbers; his companion about what is apt to prove another and yet more rapidly-growing gourd, such as is planted in heads or hearts, and needs no microscope for watching. Walter Gordon had arrived at the stage of thinking Mademoiselle Clari the most interesting woman in the world, demanding sympathetic study, rather than light criticism from an outside point of view like other men and women. They had already, he felt, set up a tacit understanding of friendship, and it was clear that yesterday in the studio she had been within an ace of giving him confidences, of the kind that mostly have to be wrung from women. Of what nature could they be? It was clear she had a story—a woman's story; that the surface Clari, all moods and whims, was very far indeed from being the true Clari, whom he had almost surprised without her domino. He felt he had almost seen through the last and inmost veil of a woman's real heart; and that is a strangely

exciting thing for a man when it happens to him for the first time. But thus far it had only been almost—the hieroglyphics had been brought into view, but lacked interpretation. That the true Clari might not prove particularly amiable was nothing; one does not ask if intense women are lovable—one loves them, or, if one does not reach that point, accepts them for what they are, and prefers them for being what nature made them.

During the drive he amused himself with piecing together the fragmentary suggestions she had allowed to melt or break from her yesterday. They were not much. She was more intensely a woman than an artist. Indeed, her art appeared to be at least no part of her, if it were not foreign to her altogether. That was strange; for though Walter Gordon had known many impostors, men and women, who followed art by way of trade, these invariably gave the world to understand that they condescended to eat bread and cheese for art's sake, and did not follow art for the sake of bread and cheese; Clari, with all the right in the world to take the highest ground, had taken the very lowest, and professed not merely cynical indifference but absolute scorn for the art that had made her Clari. Her devotion to it she seemed to regard as an evil fate that pursued her. And yet, with all her unquestionable earnestness, he could not altogether accept her sincerity. From what he had seen and guessed about her from first impressions at The Five Adzes, and from what he knew of her now, he could not conceive of her as existing without all the circumstances of triumph, of which she professed to be so contemptuously weary. It was as if she had two

natures—one just as real as the other—opposed, discordant, and yet making a fascinating kind of harmony, to which he as yet had not the key.

In short, Walter Gordon was amusing himself only too well with his speculations about a woman, with whom he had to admit he was in the most ignorant sympathy. Of course, such speculations run into castle-building—very airy castles that one enters like a visitor on a tour, rambles about a little, and comes out from, at will and pleasure. Suppose, for instance, that he should end in setting up a grand passion for the *prima donna*? It would undoubtedly be a distinction in itself, and give life a great deal of new interest. Of course, it would be a case of “Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther”—he was not going to make himself unhappy about any woman in the world. It is so easy to regulate grand passions—in the theory. There was every inducement to give charm to the enterprise. There was nothing of the commonplace about her, not even in the way she moved her fan. And—by no means her least charm, though it lay in the background—there was no more chance of such a romance ending in a question of marriage, than in any other impossibility. It would simply mean a pleasant flower-garden in the middle of life, where he might plant exotic emotions, enjoy their fragrance, and train them as he pleased.

It did not occur to him that playing at love, however sentimentally, with a woman who can hate, is rather a fiery kind of game. Women like Clari, who see things not as they are, but as they seem, take strange fancies into their heads sometimes, and stranger things have happened than that a woman with a soul of fire in her should choose for its victim a most unheroic idol. And, if love there was to be, she would not understand loving a little—indeed, a man who instinctively dreads passion, as nine men out of ten dread it, should for consistency's sake have fled, and burnt behind him all his castles in the air. After what he had seen yesterday, the idea of a pleasant flirtation with Clari should have been too outrageously absurd—and a good deal more than absurd.

Walter Gordon parted from the earl at Deepweald. Lord Quorne had his own business to attend to, and Walter's first obligation was to see the cathedral—not that he cared much about seeing a cathedral, but all places have their rights, and visitors their duties. He strolled into the

Close, stood under the elms and looked up at the tower, and put off the evil minute of making acquaintance with the verger. It was still obstinately fine weather after the storm—now more than a week ago. After all, why should he trouble himself with orthodox lionising? It was pleasant to lounge about with a cigar, and to build castles in the sun. Of course he would have to do the sight-seeing before he went back to Hinchford, but five minutes would be enough for that, and there was plenty of time.

The Close was as empty as usual. Even the rooks were away foraging, and the houses round had always an air of living altogether to and for themselves. He lounged up and down for nearly half an hour, in idle luxury, enjoying the feeling of being altogether out of the common world and in company with the most filmy delicate of day-dreams. He was on the path under the elms, when he suddenly heard a light step before him. He instinctively moved aside to let a lady pass, and then looking, saw a pair of eyes. Clari's? No; but their twins.

“Miss March! Fräulein Celia!”

“Herr Walter!”

No, they were not Clari's eyes after all. Size and colour do not make eyes. He had seen every expression in Clari's eyes save one, and that one he saw now.

Of nobody in the world had he less been thinking, as he walked up and down in front of the cathedral. Some dim recollection, or rather impression, he must have had that Celia and Deepweald were connected; but then Lindenheim was so very long ago. How can a man be expected to bear all his friends in mind for ever? He had known people half over Europe, well and intimately, whose very names had gone out of his mind. He had flirted with every girl in Lindenheim—why should he think of one more than another at odd moments of leisure?

And yet, here under the elms in Deepweald, and in the English sun, came back, in a very breath of spring, that half-forgotten walk to Waaren with the shy English girl who now stood before him, and whom years had not changed beyond recognition. There were no incidents of any other friendship that he would have remembered so well. Of course she was changed—very much changed. Despite the eyes, he had doubted when he said “Miss March;” but she was not at all

changed as his recognition led him back into the old Lindenheim form of "Fräulein Celia." She had grown, to begin with—not in inches, perhaps, but in look and bearing. She was dressed very plainly, even for a country town, in dark materials; but they became her well. Her figure had filled out, and her face had rounded. It was still without roses, but the old sallowness and meagreness had turned to a delicate contour and a pure paleness, with more youth in it than at eighteen. Her lips were as sweet in their curve as ever, and now they smiled—and so did her eyes. The features did not look so prominent now that the cheeks were less hollow, and the old decision of chin and brow, though still there, was toned down and softened. It was a very charming face, thought Herr Walter, and had fulfilled infinitely more than it promised at Lindenheim—where, indeed, it had promised nothing at all. And he could not misread the frankly happy look that shone into it as she answered, "Herr Walter!"

"Fräulein Celia! Aus Lindenheim! Is it really you?"

"You are really Herr Walter!"

"Am I? But—we were right—do you remember—when we used to call ourselves so old at Lindenheim? You must have been growing younger every year. But only to think of meeting you here!"

"Why not? I was born in Deepweald—at least I have lived here always. But it is strange to meet you."

"Why? I have always lived everywhere. But I am glad fortune has led me to Deepweald. Why, it is like old times. Of course—yes—I remember the first day we met. You told me you lived at Deepweald. Your father is organist here. Do you remember that walk to Waaren?"

Did she remember! Was it not the date whence her history of the world began?

"How it all comes back to me—meeting you! It was your first day. We set out with Lotte, and then she dropped off and I saw you safe through the Rosenthal. We talked about Schumann and Palestrina. I used to schwärm for Schumann in those days, and flirt with Irma. You remember her? I can, when I try—very hard. Then you scolded me for making that genius-fellow—what's his name?—blow the bellows in church. It was quite right of you, Fräulein Celia. And you

wouldn't dance; and we walked back by the light of the moon. Ah, I remember it all as if it had been yesterday; and it must be half-a-dozen years ago. Well, a great deal has happened since then. But how is it you are at Deepweald still? Of course I remember you came from Deepweald; but you were to be the prize star of Lindenheim."

"Oh, I'm one of the failures, I suppose," she said simply, but a little hastily. "What have you been doing since—since then?"

"It's strange how everybody at Lindenheim has turned out just opposite to what they were to be—at least most of them. You were great friends with Lotte; do you ever hear of her now? I left you at Lindenheim, you know, and have dropped out of the profession; so I'm behind the age."

"I haven't heard of Lotte since she married."

"Lotte married! Poor fellow! Unless he doesn't care to hear his own talking. How odd it always sounds to hear of a Lindenheimer marrying. Who is he?"

"She married Herr Caspar, two years after I came home."

"No! What, the genius whom you scolded me about by moonlight? Lotte and Herr Caspar! Surely it is too absurd. Why she hated the very sight of him. But perhaps she married him in order to make him have his hair cut. No—I don't pity him; I pity her."

"They are doing well, I believe. When Lotte wrote last they were in New York, and he was composing an opera bouffe, for a theatre."

"Great Heaven! He, who was to be a second Mendelssohn, who never heard of a joke! And Lotte?"

"She does nothing now."

"Mends the stockings, I suppose. And Lucas has turned stockbroker, and I painter, and Irma—well, the less said of her the better—and you are at Deepweald. Which way are you going now? I've got nothing to do here, and I'd rather have a chat with you about old times than see the cathedral."

He was really thinking about the old times; and so, as often happens, took no notice of what had made him think of them. It may safely be said that for years past that walk to Waaren, and the protecting friendship for Celia that had come of it and had endured so long as he

remained at Lindenheim, had been nothing more to him than the merest phantom of a memory, giving perfume to a thousand others indeed, but otherwise lost among them. A man who has given a bunch of violets to every girl at Lindenheim, each after each, does not treasure the recollection of one gift rather than another. Celia had not stopped walking as he spoke, and had been walking beside him with some air of the old shyness, just a little demure and mouselike in place of the old frank timidity, to remind him that she was not quite the same Celia; and now that he looked at her again he saw that she looked gravely happy.

"I am going to Mrs. Gaveston's."

"Mrs. Gaveston? No relation to my friend the curate of St. Anselm's at Winbury?"

"She is Mr. Gaveston's wife."

"Indeed? And how far is Winbury? I hope it is a long way."

"Only the end of that street. Winbury is part of Deepweald."

"Well, there are more ways of getting to a place than the straight one. Are there no other ways of reaching Mrs. Gaveston than down that street and no other? Just think, Fräulein Celia—I haven't seen you for six years."

"I'm afraid I must go that way and no other. I shall be late else."

"Oh, call on her some other day."

"I have a lesson to give her."

"You give lessons—here?"

"Yes. That is my life. I was never ambitious, you know."

He glanced at her again. What made him look at her now was a composed way she had acquired of speaking that was altogether new. He began rather to miss the old shyness. He regretted rather that he had let the thread of her life go so completely out of his fingers that he could not quite identify her with the Celia whom he was now recalling more and more. He would have liked her to remain the same. Nobody likes to go home after a long absence to find a change, if it be but no more than a new barn. He wanted to ask if her father was still the organist, but her dark clothes made him refrain. And, though he might jest over the fortunes of their fellow-students in general, he did not like to find in a country music mistress, without ambition, her who, when he left Lindenheim, was to be the very star of them all.

"Well, I'll walk with you as far as the

Gavestons', and then we'll meet again before I leave this part of the world."

He hoped she would have told him where he might call on her; and she was silent for a minute, as if making up her mind. But no invitation came.

"I hope so," she said. "But here is the Gavestons'. Good-bye!"

He would not have thought her eager to get rid of him, if he had known Deepweald. He was just now full of Lindenheim, and, for the moment, was Herr Walter walking down the Gansgasse with Fräulein Celia—not Mr. Gordon walking with Miss March in West-street, Winbury, Deepweald. And for a young lady to be walking at that hour, in full sunlight, with a strange young man, was a breach of etiquette that the most innocent were bound to know, and the most reckless to recognise.

But the time still hung on his hands—it was still a good two hours before he was to meet Lord Quorne. And he was getting hungry too, and wondered whether the curate lunched or dined at one. Finally, after another lounge, during which Lindenheim shared his thoughts—if such they could be called—with Clari, he found himself back in West-street, and rang at Gaveston's bell. There was surely no reason why he should not call on his old college friend, and every reason why he should learn something about Celia, who interested him more than the cathedral after all.

Mr. Gaveston was not at home, but Mrs. Gaveston was. All the better. Walter Gordon was not troubled with shyness of a curate's wife, and sent in his card. He had allowed ample time for a singing-lesson to be over, and was received in the parlour by a fresh-looking young lady, not of the pattern precisely of which he would have expected to find Mrs. Reginald Gaveston, provincial in bearing, but pleasant enough to look upon.

"I'm sorry I've found your husband out. He's an old college friend of mine—perhaps you've heard of his meeting me the other day? I'm staying at Hinchford."

This he said, not by way of boast, but of the introduction that instinct told him would pass best with Mrs. Gaveston.

"Oh dear! And so am I—so sorry. Mr. Gaveston will be, I mean. Of course, I'm glad to see any of his friends, or of Lord Quorne's—his cousin, you know."

"I knew him at Oxford, and I meant to

call and be introduced to Mrs. Gaveston before leaving. He won't mind my introducing myself, I daresay."

"Oh no—and now you're here, you'll take a glass of wine. I hope Lady Quorne is well?"

"Quite—thank you."

"Is this your first visit to Deepweald, Mr. Gordon? Of course you've seen the cathedral? I wish Mr. Gaveston had been at home—he'd have shown it to you better than the vergers, and our own church, St. Anselm's."

"No—I've not been to the cathedral yet. I should like to go when there's a performance—service, I mean. By-the-way, who is the organist here?"

"The organist? Mr. March. I suppose you are musical? Mr. March is a very wonderful musician, I believe. His daughter studied on the Continent, and I take lessons of her, poor girl. I used to learn of Mr. March himself before I was married. But of course that's all over now, and it's a charity, as well as an advantage, to do all one can for poor Celia March, I'm sure."

Walter was getting to the point sooner than he expected, and without any bush-beating that might have been necessary to give his visit the air of an unadulterated compliment to the wife of his friend. But what could have happened to the ex-star of Lindenheim, that she should be called "poor" by the wife of a Reginald Gaveston?

"Are they badly off, then?" he asked, as if out of polite but disinterested curiosity.

"Don't you know?"

"I'm a stranger to Deepweald, you must remember."

"Ah, of course. Poor Celia does all she can—I must say that for her—and though she isn't very bright, she has been on the Continent, which of course is something. But Mr. March always was such a strange creature. They say he used to beat her, but that I never quite believed, or they wouldn't have thought so much of him at the Palace. But that's all over now. There'll have to be a new organist before long, and John March never saved a penny, that I can swear to. You never saw, Mr. Gordon, such gowns as Celia used to wear."

"You mean her father spent all his money on her clothes?"

"If he had—but there's no good raking up bygones. Yes, there'll have to be a

new organist before long; and I'm sorry, for what they'll do I don't know."

"Why? Are they so poor? Do you mean the father is out of his mind?"

"I'm afraid he was always a little that way. But I don't know that would make much difference."

"Misconduct?"

"Oh no. I'm sure I never said that. He's Deaf—that's the matter. And enough too."

INVENTION IN FRANCE.

INGENUITY in invention is usually set down as a national attribute of the Americans, especially exemplified in the production of such articles as cypress-tree hams and wooden nutmegs. But, to judge from a list of recent French patents just published in the columns of the Commissioners of Patents' official journal, our neighbours across the Channel may fairly claim to be their rivals in this respect. During four months of last year—namely, from the beginning of July down to the end of October, at which point the official list stops—there were issued one thousand and ninety-four patents and two hundred and sixty-four certificates of addition.

Toys hold a position on this list hardly to be conceived in this country. The statement of patents granted during the four months in question includes those for a toy called popgun sabre; a toy called descenseur; a toy called reed-pipe whistle; a toy called corazophone; a toy called magical spy-glass; a mechanical toy called rifle shuttlecock; a Roumanian toy; a novel toy; an artistic toy; and a toy whistle. Under this head, too, may be counted a window-demolisher, patented under the title of a ball-bow or micro-catapult, together with improvements in tops with varying colours, metal heads for dolls, and a so-called cricket-match apparatus, which is to immortalise the name of one M. Rossignol. For the benefit of those interested in Oriental affairs, M. Aureliani has patented a game called the eastern question; and we have also a sleight-of-hand game, encyclopædic card games, and a musical game at dice, due to the brain of M. Tourseiller; whilst M. Bloch has sought to combine business and pleasure in the form of playing-cards with advertisements.

Gastronomy is so truly a French science

that one might have expected it to be somewhat better represented than it is. Yet there is one most singular patent—namely, that obtained by M. Valdenaire for preserving, improving, and converting the Lorraine cheese called *Géromé*, together with others for improvements in preparing, refrigerating, and preserving fresh meat; preparing preserved food for cooking; and preparing nitrogenised food for animals. Patents have also been taken out for a machine for shelling vegetables and grain in soft shells; a machine for coiling vermicelli for drying; and a candle and steam apparatus for boiling eggs. It is startling to note the still growing importance of a beverage once supposed to be utterly unsuited to Gallic tastes—namely, beer. We find patents granted for manufacturing malt, a mode of employing hops in making beer, a process for rendering beersparkling, a beer-cooler, ice-funnels for beer, and, finally, for utilising the residue of breweries. Wine is far from being as well represented. Yet the alarm aroused last year by the alleged extensive adulteration and colouring of wine in France has not been without effect upon the inventive genius of the nation. Whilst M. Belus has earned the gratitude of red-wine drinkers by his invention of a fuchsine detector, and MM. Lipman and Winkler by a wine test, MM. Lainville and Roy, yet more ingenious, have patented chemical cigarette-paper for detecting artificial colours in wines, so that the post-prandial whiff may be made an unsuspected medium for testing the purity of the host's claret. But what is to be said of M. Simil, who claims to have discovered an apparatus for warranting the quality of wine? Are drinkers bound to submit to its dicta, and to accept on its authority as Chambertin or Margaux a fluid "whose father grape," their palates assure them, must have ripened on the plain of Argenteuil? Fancy, in this case, the introduction of such an apparatus at public dinners!

In connection with smoking we have patents for using the leaves of eucalyptus plants as tobacco; improvements in pipes and cigar-mouthpieces; a cigar-cutter; a cigar-case; a case for cigarette-papers; a cigarette-mould; and also for a cigarette-case with a driver, whatever that may be. Closely connected with these are such inventions as a steel and tinder box called *coquet*; a silex or agate apparatus for lights for smokers; a pivot pocket light-case; a

pocket light-apparatus with radial percussion; primed pocket lights; pocket lights and candles; a match lamp with its priming; economical matches with phosphorus at both ends; match-cases fixed to the handles of umbrellas, sticks, &c.; and doubtless very useful to anyone coming home in the dark, and many more.

There are, of course, many patents relating to the production and manufacture of textile fabrics, including one for the treatment of the bark of mulberry-trees, and converting the filaments contained therein into silk, thereby dispensing with the intermediary of that troublesome and delicate creature the silkworm altogether. Novelties in wearing apparel, however, are, strange to say, not very extensively represented; though under this head we have patents granted for artificial shell almonds for ladies' bonnets and costumes; a brooch for head-dresses; prints imitating looped or cut velvet; tricot and crochet stays with figures laid on; a sanitary dress; a substitute for garters; to say nothing of such trifling accessories as pin-buttons; novel-pins; muff pockets; ladies' pages; fastenings for collars, &c. A lady, too, adorned with false brilliants, may survey herself in one of M. Stitch's flexible mirrors, and, fanning herself with one of M. Gasnier's ocular fans, gaze at a complexion improved by a product called mineralised glycerine for the toilet-table; whilst M. Larne's heated apparatus for undulating and curling ladies' hair is passed through tresses which may owe their luxuriance to the use of a sanitary liquid for making hair grow again. So, for the special use of gentlemen, inventive minds have devised, in the short space of four months, elastic backs of waistcoats; sanitary braces; slide shirts; shirts with uncrumpling fronts; duplex shirt-fronts with caoutchouc tabs; combined shirt-fronts and waistcoats; a vademecum, or shirt-front with a movable collar; an improved self-locking shirt-stud, applicable also for other fastening purposes; at least half-a-dozen fastenings for cravat collars; and a swimming or life-vest. But in the matter of boots and shoes amazement may fairly be allowed. No less than twenty-four patents relating to these were granted, including those for foot-coverings with combined soles and uppers; so-called *veriferous* foot-coverings; so-called *comfortable* foot-coverings; cold-proof foot-coverings; foot-coverings with soles with double end-pieces; so-called Parisian slippers; im-

pervious leather galoshes; movable heels applicable to all foot-coverings; and manufacturing sandals with machine-sewn soles.

We have already seen music brought strangely into connection with toys, but we have also patents for manufacturing musical toy-watches; improvements in mechanical musical instruments; a musical instrument called serophon; a vibrating musical instrument called harmonichord; whistle castanets; a substitute for castanets; and an angelical piano. We may presume that a transporting accordion owes its title to its effect, or, at any rate, its aim, being to carry away its hearers. But we can only marvel in bewilderment at the purpose to be served by a mysterious and adjustable pedal-mute for pianos; and at the ingenuity which has devised not only an apparatus for piano practice, but an apparatus for facilitating singing lessons.

Scientific and mechanical invention in all its branches is well represented, though amongst the patents to be counted under this heading are two examples of a well-known old craze in the shape of a machine for obtaining perpetual motive power, invented by M. Dupont, and an apparatus for raising head-water and obtaining perpetual motion with unlimited motive power, due to M. Dupuy. With these, too, may in all probability be classed M. Runkel's plan for steering balloons; M. Ollivier's improvements in the construction of balloons and in steering them; M. Foucault's machine for raising water by means of ammonia; and M. Snyder's plan of obtaining motive power by means of three known scientific principles. Other patented novelties in motive power are: an apparatus for propelling boats or vessels by the direct action of the superheated steam on the ambient water; a hyperdynamic apparatus for increasing motive power at pleasure; an hydro-atmospheric motor for superseding steam; means of communication upwards by river and downwards by land; a carriage propelled without using horses or steam; a mechanical carriage called baromotor; and a boat called gyroscaph. Mr. Bessemer finds a rival in M. Olivier, who has a patent for compensating the oscillation of vessels, just as Mr. Babbage finds one in M. Fontaine, who has invented a mechanical multiplication table. But, whilst gratitude is due to M. Dulaurier, who claims to have succeeded in averting many of the existing dangers of street traffic, by

inventing a tram-car accident preventer, it is to be feared that the numerous murderous assaults recently committed upon slumbering passengers on French railways will deter nervous individuals from availing themselves of a so-called somniferous apparatus for railway and other travellers, patented by MM. Rigolet and Gilbert.

Some exceedingly important discoveries in telegraphy have been made during the past year in England and America, but French progress in electric science seems hardly to have been so satisfactorily directed. We have, it is true, M. Le Roy d'Halancourt's invention of applying the insulating properties of glass and glazed porcelain for electricity to the preservation of human life, and also a continuous apparatus for manufacturing, filtering, purifying, and electrifying artificial mineral waters, an electric counter and indicator for carriages, and plans for fermentation by electricity and tanning hides by electricity. M. Lourme, too, has obtained a patent for an electric alarm for oyster-beds, doubtless to the great discomfort of the placid molluscs inhabiting them; and M. Faucher one for an electric bit for checking fiery horses, in all probability equally disagreeable to the noble animal.

We find numerous improvements in machinery and processes of manufacture of every kind, spinning, weaving, dying, smelting, sugar refining, engraving, photography, gas, steam, and other engines, railway signals and breaks, agricultural implements, stoves, presses, fire-estapes, &c. Patents relating to agriculture are very numerous, and include those for a universal manuring and sowing machine, manufacturing and applying lime to plants and vines for protecting them from hoar-frost, a product for destroying rodents, and cutting vines. And though remedies for that terrible scourge the phylloxera, of which there are several—such as an insecticide and insect preventer for agricultural purposes, and chiefly for destroying the phylloxera, tar for destroying the phylloxera, a sulphide of carbon injector for the treatment of phylloxerated vines, and a machine for distributing insecticide liquids in the soil for destroying the phylloxera—are intelligible enough, it is hard to guess the advantages of poisoning manures with powdered pyrites and their sub-products, for which M. Charmel has obtained a patent.

The titles of several inventions are startlingly unintelligible; unless, indeed, the official translations at the Patent Office are at fault. Such, for instance, are an infinite pump; so-called rational chimneys; improvements in fleshing machines; an anchor safety padlock; a radiometer relay; instantaneous provisional shores; a waker, presumably an alarm and not an attendant at an Irish funeral; a pocket counter, which might be handy for a peripatetic tradesman; and a life-purse, whatever in the name of Fortunatus that may be. It is also puzzling to imagine, why four persons should have united to take out a patent for manufacturing paper and pasteboard of pot-herbs. Equally ingenious, if more intelligible, are improvements in apparatus for producing stage effects; an automatic indicator of the time of arrival of carrier-pigeons; an apparatus for compressing air by tidal action; an anti-frost street-fountain; and an inkstand with an oscillating clasp and moving feet. The use of this last must be a sore trial to a nervous writer, even if furnished with a so-called miraculous pen; but it finds its antitype in a steady glue-pot, just as a universal crusher is supplemented by a universal triturator. A tolerably comprehensive patent must be that of M. Bougarel, for sanitary improvements for towns.

Invention in France extends even beyond the tomb. Sorrowing mourners have cause to thank M. Tiran for funeral medallions painted on unalterable glass; and M. Gellits for a machine for the manufacture of straw frames for garlands of immortelles, whereby the production of those indispensable adjuncts to a French interment will doubtless be cheapened. But what are we to say respecting M. Urban, who has secured a patent for preserving corpses by petrification, or converting them into a ceramic stone called androlithe? The ancient Romans adorned their dwellings with waxen busts of their ancestors, and now, by M. Urban's plan, the family portrait-gallery may be replaced by a file of deceased relatives, each in his habit as he lived. Moreover, in the case of great men, an historical pantheon—on the principle of Madame Tussaud's—might be established in the capital; or, if preferred, each, after being carefully treated by the process, might be despatched to his native town for erection in the Grande Place, to gratify the mania for perpetrating statues to local celebrities with which the French people are so powerfully imbued.

RETIRED TRADESMEN.

THERE are hundreds, probably thousands, of persons who, as business men, only make one serious mistake in their lives, and that is when they voluntarily retire from the battle-field, satisfied with the spoil that good luck and diligence had enabled them to gather thereon. It may at first sight appear odd, but it is undoubtedly true, that in the shopkeeping and tradesmen spheres of existence there are as many men who arrive at ultimate discontent and wretchedness, after a long career of uninterrupted success, as of that more numerous class, the members of which, struggling for years and years against repeated failure, quietly retire, crippled incurably. Nay, it may perhaps be claimed for the latter, in many cases at least, that their condition is preferable, inasmuch as they have still left them the privilege of unlimited roving in the domains of fancy, where they may speculate on "what might have been," and how happy and comfortable the evening of life would have passed with them, had it not been for those incorrigible obstructives the "ifs" and "buts," that insist on having a meddling finger in commercial as in all other worldly affairs.

Nothing is more natural than that the worthy trader, having attained the main object of his industry and striving—i.e., the accumulation of money enough for all future requirements—should resolve, at last, to put in practice the precious project long prudently deferred, and "retire." To do this is the ambition of most men, and especially of those who acquire wealth by "sticking to the counter." They are cheered by the hope of being able one day—no matter though it be somewhat remote from the present—to quit business with all its attendant cares and worries; to shut up shop for good and all; to wash the hands of till contamination, and forthwith enter the gates of a paradise where Sunday clothes are the common wear, and the pleasantest fruit the world affords may be had for the mere trouble of plucking! It must be delightful indeed to be enabled to say: "Henceforth I will enjoy perfect liberty to go where I like and do as I please." He does not overrate the blissful privilege. He, the tradesman in business, has already had some experience in the matter. He knows what Sunday leisure means, and of late years he has not been so tightly tied to

the wheel but that every summer he has taken, with his wife, a ten days' or a fortnight's holiday in the country. He has, albeit for a brief period only, tasted of the happiness of waking in the morning, neither knowing nor caring what day of the week it might happen to be. He has lounged dreamily through long hot afternoons in the lap of sheer laziness; on the sandy beach, in a boat, or beneath the shade of a spreading tree, on a clover bank softer and sweeter than any bed of down. At such moments he has remarked to the faithful partner of his shop and parlour, who invariably accompanies him in these rare outings: "This is something to look forward to, old lady! We now are only just nibbling, as it were, at the crust of the pie to which one of these days we shall sit down, and eat as much as we like, with no one to hinder us or say us 'Nay.' Since it's so nice to have a time like this once a year, what must it be to have it at one's command always?"

This, of course, is where the fatal mistake, the error irrecoverable, is made. No doubt there are many men engaged in trade, who in the decline of their thriving years are competent to settle down serenely to hard-earned ease and contented idleness; but these are the exceptions. The ordinary tradesman is successful, simply because his whole heart and soul are in the business to which he is devoted. He may himself not be altogether aware of it, and he may so far conform to the opinion of the ignorant as to speak of his daily avocation as drudgery; but really it is with him a labour of love, and none the less so because his dealings occasionally bear bitter as well as sweet fruit. Were it not for the former, which act as a wholesome medicine, he would probably die young of a surfeit of satisfaction. His trade engagements afford no leisure for wearisome reflection, and were he disposed thereto, the hours, the very minutes, of his everyday are crowded with pleasant business—pleasant to him at least. His grog and pipe, and the congenial company he meets of nights in the best parlour of *The Pig and Ploughshare*, solace his evenings. He retires to bed, and sleeps the sleep of the man who is not afraid to face to-morrow, and he wakes with all the lively wide-awakenedness that brought the business transactions of yesterday to a close.

It is this favoured child of fortune who by-and-by "retires." Perhaps, were he at liberty to consult his own inclinations,

like a sensible man, he would just go on putting up the shutters at night and taking them down in the morning, until a coffin-lid shut on him and he was carried to the grave, having enjoyed life to the last. But it generally happens that others have a voice in the matter. His wife, who knows to a pound how the banking account stands; his sons and daughters, who have been genteelly educated; his neighbours, who joke him on his eccentric persistence in remaining in business, when he has but to say the word, and, swift as the changing of a scene in a play, the crowded noisy street becomes the leafy country lane, the shop or warehouse the elegant little suburban villa, with the pony carriage, the pretty garden, and every luxury and comfort of private life. He may shake his head with some vague idea that the transformation may not exactly suit him, but when he is asked "Why not?" what can he reply? His means are ample; it is quite time that he was, even if he is not, tired of business. It is a duty he owes to his wife, who has worked as hard as he has. Judging from those holiday-time tastes of semi-rural life already hinted at, he can have no doubt he will enjoy himself to the utmost, when he is able to give his mind freely to it. His faint scruples are at length overcome, and the step is taken.

It would have been better had the bank in which his money is deposited failed, and paid him five shillings in the pound, for in such a case "retiring from business" would have been out of the question. The experiment may answer very well for three, for six months, for a year, in exceptional cases, but at the expiration of that time the tinsel of novelty wears off, and the victim awakes to the distressing fact that he cannot be off with the old love or be on with the new. Between himself and trade, there is a Siamese bond of brotherhood, to sever which is death, not instantaneous perhaps, but by the slow process of pining. A story is related of a worthy tradesman in the butchering line of business, who, having amassed a considerable fortune by means of a snug family trade in *Shoreditch*, disposed of his shop, and retired with his family to a villa residence at *Clapham*. But somehow the luxury of idleness did not agree with him, neither did the brisk air of *Clapham-common* agree with his health as did the more substantial atmosphere of the back end of *Bishopsgate*. He grew so dull and mopish that his friends were

alarmed, and a temporary migration to Margate was resolved on. It was at the height of the season, and the select watering-place in question was crowded with a mixed company of visitors, including butchers, both retired and still on active service, and for a time Mr. Shortribs quite recovered his spirits. But on returning to Clapham, his spirits sank again so rapidly, that it seemed not improbable that he would terminate his career in melancholy madness. At last, one day, he amazed his wife by announcing his determination to return to Margate for a few weeks alone. He felt sure, he said, that although it was now the depth of winter, the sea-breezes would revive him; and he moreover promised to return to Clapham at the end of each week, and pass Sunday with his family. He went, and lo! the very first week saw a change in him that was almost miraculous. His eye was brighter, his flesh firmer; there were even indications of a return of that roseate hue to which his cheeks had long been strangers. Another week, and he returned fresher than ever. Still another, and he was the Shortribs of old, with a jovial laugh, a ready joke, and an appetite he seemed to have lost irrecoverably when he quitted Shoreditch. Still, he expressed no desire to settle down once more at Clapham. He pleaded for another week, and yet one more, until his wife, with a fond woman's foolish misgivings, began to suspect that possibly there might be something more in it than appeared on the surface. The next time that her husband, gay and cheerful, set out with his bag on Monday morning, she—well, there is no use in mincing the matter—she caused him to be watched. And with a most astonishing result. It was all a subterfuge as to Shortribs going to Margate. He had never, during the whole period since his health and spirits began to improve so astonishingly, been farther than Camdentown. There, at the shop of a trustworthy brother-butcher, sworn to secrecy, he had passed the pleasant time, busy with knife and steel from Monday morning until Saturday night.

A retired publican may perhaps endure an idle existence better than any other tradesman, for the reason that he may, if it pleases him, spend his leisure in the fond contemplation of the scene of his former joys and triumphs; but it cannot be so with the draper, the cheesemonger, the baker, the tea-dealer; a man cannot

be constantly purchasing loaves of bread, or pounds of cheese, for the fleeting pleasure of listening to the chink of shop scales, and of inhaling for a few seconds the familiar aroma of the "stock" which is so grateful to his nostrils. And the worst of it is, that having once fairly "retired" from his accustomed avocation, even though he be ever so much inclined thereto, he must not return to it; it being a fact known to all tradesmen, that there was never yet a man who voluntarily abandoned the shop and took to it again, who did not speedily come to grief. Why it should be so is not easy to explain. It may be a way Fortune has of avenging herself on those who slight her favours, or who wantonly seek divorce from her. There is no help for the unfortunate victim. A miserable man, he is doomed to fret away the remainder of his allotted time on earth, with his spirits crushed, and his heart heavy with the old unconquerable yearning.

STORIES FROM A BANK COUNTER.

TWO ECCENTRIC DEPOSITORS.

DURING my twenty years' experience as cashier of a large London bank, I have come across many strange events, and stranger people, upon whose histories it is interesting to look back.

I propose on this occasion to relate to the reader two little episodes of my experience, showing the curious kinds of people who sometimes come forward to deposit their money, in response to the bank's advertisement.

One day, some years ago, a rough-looking man, of singular appearance, came slouching into the bank, and walking up to my desk, took off his hat respectfully, and held it in his hand. Now it is a strange fact, that it is not usual in London for anyone to take off his hat on entering a bank, although I believe it is done in some country banks; so I looked at the man with some suspicion, expecting to hear a pitiful story, with a pathetic appeal for assistance. He was dressed in ill-fitting black clothes; a black silk handkerchief was wound around his neck in many folds, no shirt-collar being visible. His hands looked rough and horny, like those of a labouring man. No trace of whisker appeared on his well-shaven face, and a certain good-natured expression which it wore was marred by a villainous

squint. He was apparently about sixty; his hair was quite gray, and was arranged upon each of his temples in those strong circular curls, which are vulgarly known as "Newgate knockers." Altogether, he had a most unprepossessing appearance, something like what you would expect to see in a retired burglar. He stood hat in hand before my desk, respectfully waiting until I should be disengaged. He then said apologetically:

"Beg your pardon, sir, but could I speak to you for a few minutes?"

I replied, of course, that I was at his service, whereupon he seemed to become confused, shifted uneasily from foot to foot, and twirled his hat nervously. He had evidently something to say, but did not know how to begin.

"You see, sir," he said at last, "I've just come back to England from Australia. I've got a little bit of money as I don't know what to do with, not being a scoldard; so I thought I'd come in and ask your advice, sir, and whether you'd take care of it for me."

I made no reply, but waited. The first appearance of the man had aroused my suspicions, and these were increased when he produced from some mysterious pocket a very dirty leather bag, tied with string. He opened it, and handed over to me a packet, consisting of bank-notes and new Australian sovereigns, amounting to two thousand pounds. He then produced out of an old pocket-book a document, which proved to be a draft upon the London branch of one of the largest Australian banks for five thousand pounds.

In reply to my question, he told me that his name was Ebenezer Knott—he showed a noble indifference to the spelling—and verified his assertion by showing me an envelope addressed to him in that name. He informed me that he had been in Australia for more than twenty years, having gone out there at the period of the great gold fever to seek his fortune. He had formerly been a "coster" in London, he said, and thought he should be as well able to rough it in the "bush," as would many gentlemen who were going out there at the time. Anyhow he was strong, and was not afraid of work. He did not inform me in what way he had contrived to pay his passage out—he seemed disinclined to speak about it. I have my own suspicions on the subject, but I shall probably be safe in asserting that his emigration was "assisted."

His success was not great at the diggings; "a lot of hard work," he informed me, "and standing in a river all day, and only getting as much as paid your way. We didn't find no big nuggets; me and my pals was glad to get a little dust; but sometimes the 'swells' used to manage to find some good ones."

The gang was soon broken up, and Knott next started a spirit store at Scott's Rush. The store became the resort of some of the richest men of the place, who used it as a kind of exchange or club. By degrees, Knott's Store grew into Knott's Hotel, which Mrs. Knott managed with great skill and success. Ebenezer had now reached the height of his ambition, and he was happy. His wealth had increased without his care or effort, everything he bought seemed immediately to increase in value. But just at this time a great blow came, which nearly broke his heart. A malignant fever broke out at Scott's Rush, and Mrs. Knott fell a victim to it. Poor Ebenezer was disconsolate, for he was now left altogether alone in the world. He hated the place which had been the scene of so great a misery to him, although it had been also that of all his fortune. He conceived an intense yearning to return to the old country, and longed to find himself once more among the old familiar faces and streets of London. He therefore determined to realise his property, and return with it to England; "not as a gentleman, you know, sir," he added apologetically, "but in order to see my native land again, and, perhaps, be able to help some of my old pals who have not been so fortunate in life."

There was something so genuine in the tone and manner in which this narrative was told me, that I could not refuse to give it at least a partial credence. I therefore opened a deposit account in his name, and received from him seven thousand pounds. It was a difficulty that he could neither read nor write, although he informed me with a certain air of triumph, that he could make a cross "which it would lick anybody to copy." He therefore signed his mark in the signature-book with a great many intricate flourishes, back strokes and dots, which quite justified his description of it, and I proceeded to fill up and sign the deposit receipt. When I offered it to him, however, he drew back with a comical look of dignity.

"I don't want no receipt, sir," he said.

"Do you think I can't trust you? Why, sir, I think my money's as safe in this here bank as in any place on earth."

I explained to him that it was not a question of confidence, but of rule and custom, and that, without the receipt, it would be difficult for him to draw the money out. This seemed to disconcert him, and he replied:

"Well, and supposing I was to lose the blessed paper, and some cove was to bring it here and get the money out; what good would it do me? No, no, sir! I reckon as you're not likely to forget my phiz; and when I comes again, with or without papers, I know you'll do the right thing. Look here, sir," he continued, firmly, seeing that I still held the paper out to him, "if you give me that there paper I'll tear it up, as sure as my name is Ebenezer Knott."

After much argument I consented to keep the receipt in my desk for him, and he departed after making bold to offer a pinch of snuff to all the clerks in the vicinity of the counter.

About a week after this our nerves were upset by the strains of a large organ, which was being played outside the bank windows. This excited the more surprise as no organs are allowed in the City during business hours. Thomas, the old bank-porter, went out with an air of official importance and endeavoured to silence the player. The latter, however, was an Italian who either could not or would not understand, and Thomas's efforts were for some time unavailing. At length the arrival of a policeman on the scene put a sudden end, in the middle of a bar, to the music. The policeman seized the horse by the bridle, and led it off with the organ and the much-gesticulating Italian to the Mansion House. We were still laughing at the suddenness of the catastrophe, when Mr. Knott entered in a state of great agitation. He informed me that he had purchased the organ and the horse, and had engaged the services of the Italian, with the object of making a tour with them in the provinces. Previous to leaving London, however, he had resolved upon treating the bank to a serenade, in order to show us at once his gratitude and the superior nature of the instrument. He had no notion that in doing this he was breaking the regulations of the City, which must have been made, he said, since he left London; and he was deeply mortified at having been interfered with by the

police. As I happened to know one of the officials at the Mansion House, I accompanied him there, and speedily put matters right for him.

At his earnest request I called upon him at the Old Bell in Holborn, where he was staying, on my way home from the City that evening. He began by expressing the gratification which my visit had given him, and his sense of the honour I had done him. He then entered at once on the business concerning which he wished to consult me.

He informed me that, when he left this country twenty years ago, he had had many friends, and that one reason of his returning to it had been that he wished to see if he could not do some good to them or their children. He had devoted much time, and had gone to some expense, in tracking them out, and had found that nearly all of them had either died or had taken to bad courses. Many of them were in prison. Their wives had taken to drinking, and their children to worse vices still. He was soon convinced that nothing could be done for them, and that any pecuniary help which he might give them would probably be badly applied. He saw clearly that the only effective means he could take to assist them would be by taking from them the children who were young enough to be reclaimed, and giving them "a dedication as their parents 'adn't 'ad." He proposed to place five of these at small schools, and after a few years' training to apprentice them to different trades, such as carpenters, masons, bricklayers, &c. The parents of these five had consented to part with their children; but now came the difficulty. He didn't know how to set about it—what schools to select, how to provide for the payment of their fees, and those of their subsequent apprenticeship, and so on.

So he appealed to me as a "scollard" to assist him. He said he had been much disappointed on returning to England, where he found himself utterly friendless and isolated, and had made up his mind to go back to Australia after a time; there at least he knew that his money would gain for him a consideration which he saw it would not get him in London. He laid it all down to his want of "dedication."

Much moved by the simple and disinterested generosity of this rough and illiterate man, and by the strong common sense which had marked his application

of it, I willingly offered to render him all the assistance in my power, and suggested that he should appoint three trustees to carry out his wishes, adding that I should be happy to ask three charitable gentlemen of position to act in that character. The old man's eyes grew moist and gleamed with pleasure, and his face assumed an expression of kindness and goodness which quite effaced the roughness and uncomeliness which a hard life had impressed upon it. He thanked me warmly for my proposition, but said he would only assent to it upon one condition, which was that I should consent to be one of the trustees myself. It was then agreed that I should ask the manager of the bank and another gentleman I knew, both of whom were interested in the education of the poor, to act with me.

"And now, sir," he continued, drawing his chair nearer to me, speaking in a mysterious whisper, and looking cautiously round, as if he feared that there might be some listener concealed in the room, "I want you to do me another favour. When I was in Australia I invested a goodish sum in Government Stocks, which pay me very well. They gave me a lot of bonds for it," he added in an undertone, "and I'm bless'd if I know what to do with the blessed papers. I always carry them about with me, and they're a perfect torment; 'cos if anybody was to steal them from me, you know, or if I was to lose them, they wouldn't pay me the interest. So I wanted to ask you if you'd mind taking care of them for me."

I told him he could leave them at the bank, and that they would be properly taken care of for him. He then went up to his room and returned with a parcel wrapped up in a very dirty newspaper, tied with string, and proceeded to open it. What was my surprise when I found it contained New South Wales Bonds to the tune of ten thousand pounds!

"Why, Mr. Knott," I exclaimed, "you are a rich man. That makes seventeen thousand pounds!"

"Why yes, sir," he replied humbly, "I have been very lucky, and that's a fact. But besides this I've got a mortgage on some property in Australia for three thousand five hundred pounds. And the money ain't no use; I wish it was. I should like to make it useful, if I could, to some of those poor boys I see every day playing in the courts and alleys here."

"Well," I said, "it is very good of you.

And I think you are quite right in putting those bonds into a place of safety, so bring them to the bank and I will arrange it for you."

I then took my leave, with much difficulty resisting his oppressive hospitality.

The next day Knott appeared with his bundle of securities, which I placed in the strong-room of the bank. I had spoken to the manager and to the friend I had mentioned to Knott, and had had no difficulty in persuading them to act as trustees with me. I arranged for an interview between them and Knott at the offices of the bank's solicitors, where he gave instructions for the drawing up of the trust deed. We were all much surprised when Knott, after many preliminary coughs and much clearing of the throat, announced that he would at once transfer five thousand pounds to the credit of the trust. He gave instructions that the income of this sum, or of any other moneys which he might in future transfer to it, were to be applied, as far as they would go, to the education and apprenticeship of any destitute children we might select, giving the preference at first to the five whom he named.

"And mind you, sir," he said, addressing the solicitor, "I want you to put it in writing that these boys and girls are to be brought to earn their bread honestly, and not to be made ladies and gentlemen of. Let the girls be sent to service, and the boys be taught useful trades. All the rest I leave to these gentlemen, who will do the right thing. And I want them to be able to send these boys and girls, when they have learned their business, to the colonies, where they can get on better than they can in this country, if so be that they're industrious and not afraid of work. That's my experience."

In a few days' time the deed was drawn up and signed, the money transferred to the new account, and the children indicated sent to industrial schools.

Shortly after this Knott took his leave, and started upon his musical tour. For about four months we heard no more of him; but one day in the late autumn he reappeared, his face and hands very much bronzed, and altogether looking in much better health. I took him into the manager's room, and he then related to us the story of his travels. He had travelled with his organ along the whole southern coast of England, from Margate to Falmouth, and had returned through Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset, to Bristol, and

thence by train to London. He had enjoyed himself "splendid," he said, and would have gone farther, only that the organ wanted some repairs.

"We have lived like fighting-cocks," he said, "and I've made about eighty pounds over and above expenses. And now, sir," he continued confidentially, "you remember what I told you at the Old Bell that day? I've made up my mind to go back to Australia for a spell, and I shall come back again in a couple of years' time. But before I go, I want to add the rest of the money you have of mine in bonds to the other for the poor children."

I endeavoured to dissuade him, pointing out how inconvenient it would be for him if he should in any way lose the remainder of his fortune. He laughed cheerily and said:

"Oh, never fear for me. I shall fall on my feet all right, as I always have. Besides, I'm not so old but what I can earn my living as I always did. I've got now five hundred pounds in bank-notes, and after paying my passage I shall have enough left to live upon with what I can make."

At his earnest request I accompanied him to Liverpool and saw him safely on board his ship.

When taking leave his eyes filled with tears and his voice faltered with emotion.

"God bless you, sir," he said, pressing my hand, "and may He reward you for your charity in looking after these poor children!"

And he brushed his eyes with his horny hand, and turned away. Then pulling himself together, as with an effort, he said: "Excuse me, sir, for being such a fool, but I'm only a poor ignorant man, and no scollard," he added with a sob which fairly choked him. "I'll see you soon again, sir; you'll find I'll come back, like a bad shilling."

I could not trust myself to speak, but wrung his hand and left the ship.

When I reached the shore I looked back, and saw him standing at the ship's side, the wind blowing about his long gray hair while he waved me a last farewell.

The events I have mentioned took place many years ago, but no word has reached me of Knott since then, although I have made enquiries concerning him in all the principal cities in Australia. Perhaps he may return some day unexpectedly, as I hope he will, and be rejoiced, as I have

been, at the happy fruits of his disinterested charity. By means of it forty children have already been rescued from the influence of vice and infamy, apprenticed to trades, or sent into service according to their sex. Ten of them have been already sent out to New South Wales, and are prospering.

The eccentricity of my second eccentric depositor was of quite a different kind. This is the story:

Outside the portal of the bank, a commissioner, named Copp, has for many years taken up his position. He is not in the service of the bank, but being a man of tried probity and trustworthiness, his right to the station is tacitly admitted. He is an old soldier, and has served with distinction in many glorious battles, as the numerous medals, which he proudly displays upon his breast, bear witness. He has been a sergeant-major, and comports himself with a suitable dignity. Upon many occasions, on busy days, he has been entrusted with missions of delicacy and responsibility, and has always fulfilled them with tact and exactitude.

One morning I was waiting at my desk for the arrival of our early customers, when I saw Copp advancing to me with his military step, and with even more than his customary dignity. He held in his hand a dirty canvas bag, which he placed on my desk.

"Well, Copp," I said, "whose account is this for?"

He stood at attention, and said after saluting:

"This bag, sir, was placed in my hands an hour ago by a man who asked me to take care of it till he came back. Thinking, perhaps, he was a customer of the bank, I took charge of it, and as he hasn't come back, I thought I had better bring it to you, sir, as it seems to contain money."

I opened the bag, and found that it contained seven hundred and fifty pounds in bank-notes and gold; but there was no indication of the person to whom it belonged, either written upon a paper, as is customary, or upon the backs of the notes. Copp seeing my surprise, added:

"I beg pardon, sir, but I may as well tell you, that the party who handed me the bag was decidedly inebriated—in fact, sir, I may say drunk. He could scarcely stand, and didn't seem hardly to be able to speak."

"Very well," I replied; "you may leave

it with me, and when the man comes, bring him in here."

"Yes, sir," said Copp, who saluted and retired.

I put the bag on one side, fully expecting that the owner would soon call and claim it. At the end of the day, however, nobody had called, although Copp had kept a sharp look-out at the door. I was much surprised at this, and put by the money. The next day and the next passed by, and still no claimant appeared. I interrogated Copp as to the description of the man. He said he was a short, thick-set man, with dark hair and whiskers, but no moustache. He wore a black coat, very seedy-looking, and his face and hands and shirt were very dirty; "looked as if he'd been on the loose, sir," he added.

At the expiration of another week, I inserted advertisements in all the principal daily papers, stating that a bag containing a sum of money had been found, and inviting the owner to claim it, and specify the contents. No satisfactory answers were received to the advertisement, and the question remained, What was to be done with the money? We could not place it to any account in the bank, and we could not, of course, open an account in an unknown name. The manager was of opinion that, as the money had been left in the hands of Sergeant Copp, who was not an official of the bank, and, besides, who was standing in the street at the time, there was no evidence of it having been intended to be lodged in the bank, and that therefore it should be handed over to the commissionaire.

Upon my telling Copp this, however, he stoutly refused to have anything to do with it. "It was not his," he said, "and he had only taken charge of it upon the supposition that it belonged to one of the customers of the bank." The matter was finally settled by opening a deposit account in the joint names of Copp and myself.

Two years rolled by, and nothing further was heard of the mysterious depositor, and I began to think that the amount would ultimately fall into the hands of the worthy Sergeant Copp or his family, to whom it would be a small fortune. At length, however, one morning, Sergeant Copp walked up to my desk with an expression of great pleasure upon his honest face.

"Beg your pardon, sir," he commenced; "can I speak to you for a few minutes?"

"Certainly," said I; "what is it?"

"Well, sir, do you remember that bag of money—two years ago?"

"Of course I do," I replied with interest, "who could forget it?"

"Well, sir, I think I've got a clue to the man who left it with me."

It appeared that the sergeant's son was apprenticed to an upholsterer in the City. Among the workmen in the establishment who had recently joined was a French-polisher. One day, in the course of conversation, he told his fellow-workmen the following facts concerning a foreman of the firm of Smith and Jones, where he had formerly worked. This foreman, whose name was Thompson, had been with the firm a great many years; he was entrusted by his employers from time to time with the collection of large amounts of money, and had always been found honest and upright. Upon one occasion, about two years before, a shipping order had come to the firm for a quantity of furniture from a new foreign house, of which they had some suspicions. The goods were ordered to be shipped on a certain day, and it was agreed that they were to be paid for in money before being placed on board. As the order came to seven hundred and fifty pounds, the foreman went down himself in charge of the goods, with strict injunctions from his employers either to bring them back or the money. The goods were placed on board the ship from the lighter in the docks—so much was ascertained; but the foreman who had received the money, and had given a receipt for it, was never seen again, either by the firm or by his wife and family. The lighterman, who had been present at the payment of the money, and had conveyed Thompson ashore, deposed that he had not been able to get the goods on board on the day when they were sent down, and Thompson passed the night at a sailors' coffee-house in the neighbourhood of the docks, in order to be in time to assist at their transhipment in the morning. When he arrived on board he looked very strange, and the lighterman noticed that his watch and chain were missing. Altogether, Thompson's appearance was that of a man who was still suffering from the effects of a night's debauch. On taking him ashore, the lighterman had conducted Thompson, at his urgent request, to a public-house, and had there left him. From this point impenetrable mystery hung over the matter. Had Thompson decamped with the money, or had he been the victim of some foul

play? The first hypothesis was scouted by Thompson's friends and fellow-workmen. He had shown himself for more than twenty years a man of probity; he was a sober and prudent man, whose only delight was in his home and his children. He was always preaching habits of saving and economy to the men under him, and when he disappeared, it was found that he had a considerable sum in the savings-bank, which he had never touched. It was incredible, therefore, that he could have embezzled his employers' money. The second hypothesis seemed the more reasonable one. But if he had been murdered, how had his body been disposed of? The river had been closely watched from the Tower to the sea, but no corpse answering his description had ever been found.

Young Copp had carried this story to his father; and the sergeant had with much difficulty succeeded in discovering Thompson's unfortunate wife and family, who were now reduced to great poverty. From them he learned the confirmation of the sad story, and felt sure that now at last he had found the missing clue.

The good sergeant then waited on Messrs. Smith and Jones, in whose employment Thompson had been, and ascertained two facts which confirmed him in his supposition. The seven hundred and fifty pounds had been paid by the foreign firm which had bought the goods, in exactly the same proportion of notes and gold as the sum left with the commissionaire, and the date upon which they were paid corresponded with that of the mysterious deposit. The unfortunate hiatus in the chain of evidence was that nobody knew the numbers of the bank-notes which had formed part of it.

"What do you think, sir?" concluded Copp.

I replied that I thought the solution probable, but that we should proceed very cautiously in the testing of every proof.

After turning over the matter carefully in my mind, I came to the conclusion that the only means of identifying the sum paid to Thompson with that left with Sergeant Copp, would be a comparison of the numbers of the notes in each instance. But then came a formidable difficulty. The foreign firm had been dissolved, and its members had left England. They had also already informed Messrs. Smith and Jones that they had omitted to take the numbers of the bank-

notes which had been remitted to them from the Continent.

The plan I at last hit upon was as follows:

When the seven hundred and fifty pounds were paid into the deposit account, the notes which formed a portion of the sum were sent by us to the Bank of England in the regular course of business, and were there cancelled. I ascertained at the Bank of England the name and address of the firm to whom the notes had been first issued, and then traced them through the several hands through which they had passed. Following up the clue, I discovered that some of them had been sent to a bank at Paris. I wrote to this bank, enquiring to whom they had been paid, and, to my great gratification, was informed that they had been sent to the very firm in London a few days before they had handed them over to Thompson.

Here, then, was the missing link, and I had no longer any doubt in my mind that the money paid to us was the same as that which had been lost by Messrs. Smith and Jones.

Honest Sergeant Copp was overjoyed, and wished to go at once to Mrs. Thompson and give her the good news. This, however, I would not permit, as I thought it would be better to endeavour, in the first instance, to ascertain the fate of the poor foreman. I therefore called upon Messrs. Smith and Jones, and informed them that I had obtained certain information, which led me to believe that a sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds paid into the bank was identical with that lost by them, but that the only person who could satisfactorily prove the fact was Thompson, and that he must therefore be found. They promised to do their best to aid my enquiries, and employed a detective for the purpose. In the course of a few weeks they were able to inform me that Thompson had been discovered in Paris, working under an assumed name, and that, on being informed of the discovery, he had at once come over to his family, who were overjoyed at his return.

On the following day Thompson called at the bank, and was recognised by Sergeant Copp as the very individual who had left the money with him.

The explanation given by Thompson of the transaction was, that his coffee had been drugged at the house where he slept, and his watch stolen from him. He had, however, nerved himself by a violent effort

the following morning to be at his post on the lighter, and, although half stupefied, had with some difficulty received and counted over the money; that on going ashore he had repaired to a public-house near the docks, in order to get some soda-water; that, after taking it, he had rambled through the streets on his way to the workshop.

His mind, however, was a complete blank as to everything which occurred afterwards, until he found himself lying in a narrow alley, surrounded by ill-looking people. When he came to himself he was paralysed with fear on finding, as he thought, that he had been robbed of his bag. His brain was dazed with the thought of the fearful accusations which would certainly be brought against him. Who would believe that he was guiltless of any crime, when appearances were so much against him? How could he explain away his seeming state of intoxication when he went on board the ship in the morning? And, above all, how could he explain the loss of the bag? He could remember that up to a certain time, after leaving the public-house, he still had the bag safe in the breast-pocket of his coat, for he had a distinct recollection of keeping his arm tightly pressed against it. He had a dim recollection of finding himself amid streets of tall stone houses, and of reeling against several people on the pavement; but after that his memory was altogether blotted out. All was darkness and vacancy until he awoke.

Then a feeling of blank despair took possession of his mind. How could he ever again show himself among his friends—he who had held his head so high, and had been so forward in denouncing vice and drink? He would be a laughing-stock to all the world; and, then, the stain upon his honesty! Messrs. Smith and Jones he knew to be very hard people; they never had spared anybody in their business dealings, and they would certainly bring a criminal charge against him. The idea was horrible. He would rather die than submit to such indignity.

Pondering these things over in his mind, he had wandered heedlessly through the streets without remarking whither he was going. Fate or instinct seemed to lead him to the riverside again, and he found himself at last at St. Katharine's Dock. Exactly facing where he stood was a flaming placard, announcing the departure

that day of a boat direct for Calais at a very low rate of passage. The thought darted into his mind, Why not cut his difficulties at once, and put the sea between himself and the scene of his disgrace?

It was a cowardly temptation which, if his intellect had been in a clearer state, would have been instantly rejected with scorn; but the poisonous drug which he had imbibed seemed to have paralysed his energy, and to have utterly unmanned him and deprived him of the courage necessary to face his trouble. He yielded to the temptation, and made his way through to Paris, where, under an assumed name, he succeeded in getting work, for he was very expert at his business.

Nothing could exceed the delight of the worthy commissionaire at having been the means of clearing up the mystery, except, indeed, his pride in retelling the oft-told tale. Nor was his honesty unrewarded in a more substantial manner, for Messrs. Smith and Jones presented him with a hundred pounds as a recognition of his integrity and intelligence.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER IX. REVOLUTION.

HE still lived; but, apparently, he was desperately wounded, and had fainted from loss of blood. With some difficulty we carried him into a café close by, the door of which chanced to be open, in the Rue Neuve de Luxembourg, and placed him upon one of the marble tables.

"His heart still beats," said Guichardet. And he went out to obtain medical aid.

"He must have been handsome, once," said a waiter, steeping his napkin in water and bathing the forehead of the wounded man.

Poor Paul! He was terribly changed; so gaunt and worn, wasted and pallid, with a fortnight's beard bristling on his chin. His clothes were in rags, splashed and plastered with blood and mire; the hands, once so white and effeminate-looking, were now torn and soiled and bleeding; the handsome face was sunken and livid; there were patches of gray discernible among the dark curls, now covered with dust and thickly matted together; privation and

suffering had brought age upon him with the suddenness of a blow.

His wounds were washed and bandaged; his lips were moistened with cognac; he sighed deeply, then opened wide his large gray eyes; they roved listlessly hither and thither, then rested upon me. But there was no speculation in them; only a sort of insane fire. He did not recognise me.

"Tell me the watchword and the time and place," he muttered. "Death to the tyrant! Does the king go to the opera to-night? Strike and spare not. Fieschi, Pepin, Morey, Alibaud, Meunier, and the rest. Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité. Vive la République!" Then with a change of voice, he added: "Nous sommes trahis! Vengeons nos frères!"

"Is he dead?" demanded several blousiers, hurriedly entering, pushing past the waiter who tried to keep them back. They were armed with pikes and drawn sabres; one bore a lighted torch, which filled the room with sulphurous smoke.

At the door stood a tumbril filled with corpses. A ghastly procession had been organised. The victims of the fusillade of the Boulevard des Capucins were to be carried round Paris, to awaken the people to a sense of their wrongs, to kindle their fury, to rouse them to desperate acts of chastisement and vengeance.

Tumbril follows tumbril. Thousands of torches illumine the horrible scene. Close ranks of armed men escort the corpses on their dreadful mission. Muskets, pikes, and sabres are brandished in the air; fierce songs are chanted, hoarse cries are uttered, demanding retribution, blood for blood, and the Republic! From time to time a corpse is held aloft, its limbs helplessly pendulous—here a dead woman, and there a dead child; the gaping wounds are exposed, with the blood still oozing and dripping—innocent blood, proclaim the crowd, shed in maintenance of an odious tyranny! The hideous pageant winds round Paris like a snake—spreading poison where it passes. The people shudder at its approach, then stand and gaze, fascinated by its horrors, then fly to arms and follow in its wake. The tocsin still clangs and clashes from a hundred steeples; the clatter of musketry is heard again and again through the long dark hours of night. Even the king is startled as he muses in the Tuileries how he can best appease the people by yet another shuffling of the political cards, or suppress the émeute—for, to his thinking, it is not

yet a revolution—by prompt and energetic employment of his sixty thousand soldiers, the army of Paris. But a cordon of barricades has been drawn round the palace. The king is surrounded by his troops—thickly clustered in the Place du Carrousel, the courtyard of the Tuileries, the Place du Palais Royal, the Place de la Concorde, and the Champs Elysées—but the king and his forces are, in their turn, circled and hemmed in by an infuriated nation in arms.

On the morrow the French monarchy falls.

Ministry after ministry has crumbled to dust in the king's hands. The people fire and sack the Palais Royal. The king abdicates. "I am unwilling that any more blood should flow for my sake." He had never spoken more royal words. But, already, his army is failing him; lacking firm control and sturdy words of command, effete from inactivity, it falls to pieces. Soon, the cavalry are seen to be surrendering their sabres to the people; the infantry are yielding their muskets. It is proposed that the Duchess of Orleans shall be Regent of France. The people invade the Chamber. The duchess escapes with her children—the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres. The Tuileries is attacked by the people, who enter the palace by one door; as the king and his family steal out at another.

It was an unpicturesque and even ignominious conclusion to an important chapter of history. The king and his family—on whose account he has made so many sacrifices, stooped so very low—are closely packed in two broughams and a two-wheeled cab. Constructed to hold six persons, these little carriages are now compelled to carry some fifteen. Personages of great importance are, for once, jammed tightly together, like figs in a drum, or sardines in a box. So they escape from Paris, the people burning the throne behind them. Presently they are making their way to England. The queen has assumed the name of Madame Lebrun; the king, affecting to be an Englishman, calls himself Mr. William Smith. He muffles himself in a thick great-coat, he disguises himself with spectacles, he has relieved his bald cranium of the famous curled wig that so long has covered it. He has lost his old resemblance to a pear. There is an end of all jocosity in that regard. The pear has been gathered!

A Provisional Government, with much

very troublesome work before it, has been instituted at the Hôtel de Ville. The Tuileries has been converted into an hospital for the reception of the martyrs or the victims of the Revolution of February.

The pallets of the wounded and the dying are ranged against the walls of the central pavilion, the grand ball-room of the palace. Every trace of royal occupation has been ruthlessly swept away: The pictures have been cut from their frames, or perforated again and again with bullets; the furniture has been hacked to pieces; mirrors have been smashed with the butt-ends of guns; the gilded panels have been pierced and splintered and prized by the thrusts of pikes and iron railings; magnificent china vases have been hurled at sheets of looking-glass, so that the labour of destruction might be economised and quickened; statues of marble or alabaster, clocks, chandeliers, lustres, porcelain treasures of all kinds, have been flung from the windows, that they might be assuredly shivered to pieces upon the pavement of the courtyard below. The throne has been torn from its place, slashed with knives, defiled with mud and filth, carried in ironic procession round the city, and finally burnt at the foot of the Column of July, an exulting mob dancing round the fire, singing ribald songs and gesticulating with savage glee. The Revolution has duly celebrated its saturnalia.

Paul Riel had been recognised as a leading member of the republican brotherhood, long in conspiracy against the Government, and had been carefully removed to the Tuileries, borne upon the shoulders of his friends and attended by an escort of the National Guard under the command of M. Alexis, who now seemed popularly known as Colonel La Grange.

Paul lay upon his pallet like one dead, he was so white and still. He had been carefully tended. The most skilful surgeons in Paris had placed themselves at the disposal of Government, and daily visited the wounded in the hospital of the Tuileries. But his state was judged to be almost hopeless.

At the head of his pallet, her arm circling the pillow upon which his head rested, a woman crouched or nestled. Her hair, escaped from its combs, had fallen forward, and half hid her face; her eyes were weak and red from watching, and anxiety, and want of rest. No tears had come to the relief of her acute distress.

She was known to be an Englishwoman, and she had become an object of interest and sympathy to many. Rude, bearded men, stained with labour and with conflict, saluted her as they passed by. The saloon had become overcrowded, and it had been proposed to remove all but those whose state really demanded surgical aid. This was the advice of Dr. Sanson, a student of the Polytechnic School, charged with the care of the wounded. It had been his duty also to deal with the dead, stretched under the sheltering walls of the larger buildings or huddled in the lower stories or in courtyard corners. The poor wretches had crept to secluded spots to die.

"She must be suffered to remain," said a tall man in a black frock-coat buttoned to the chin. His manner was most dignified, with yet a suspicion of self-consciousness marring it somewhat. His fine-featured face wore an ascetic look; there were lines of thought or of care scoring the lofty forehead and surrounding the lips. His hair was tinged with gray. "She is his wife; her place is by his pallet. To remove her would be to wrong at once the living and the dying."

The speaker was Lamartine—the idol of the people for a season. He had been daring enough to mount the whirlwind, and capable enough to direct the storm of revolution. His triumph had been supreme; it did not, it could not endure. Rhetoric is but of indifferent force considered as an engine of government.

He was visiting the hospitals to encourage and comfort the sick and wounded. He was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the new Government, and in the height of his popularity. Men pressed round him as though to derive benefit and virtue from touching the hem of his garment. He might well forget how infirm was the pedestal upon which he stood raised above his fellows.

"Poor woman!" he said.

He whispered an enquiry into the ear of Dr. Sanson. The reply was not hopeful apparently.

His lips tightened, his brows lowered, he bowed his head gravely, and with a look of deep pity passed on his way. Doris had been wholly unconscious of his presence. Her eyes had been fixed upon the deadly pale face of Paul Riel. But she stirred presently, and perceived me standing close beside her.

"Oh, Basil!" she said, and then repeated over and over again: "Why did I

not come sooner? If I had but known! If I had but known!"

She had started from London immediately upon receipt of my letter informing her that Paul had been discovered.

"Is there no hope, Basil? Can it be that there is no hope? I will not, I cannot believe it! These doctors may be mistaken. They are not English doctors, you know; they may really be mistaken. He slept well last night; he scarcely stirred at all. He was without pain, and no evil dreams seemed to trouble him. That is a good sign, is it not?"

"No doubt. The brain fever has abated."

"And his pulse, though it is very faint, still it is very regular. Is not that a good sign also?"

"I think so. He is very weak, of course. He had gone through so much, and his wounds were severe."

"My poor husband! I wish I were a doctor, Basil. I think if I were a doctor I could cure him. Why don't they teach girls medicine, and how to tend the wounded? We really learn nothing that is useful. His hands do not burn nearly so much, do they, Basil? I'm sure that must be another good sign. Basil, do you really think there is hope? Only say that you think so."

"Indeed I try and think so, Doris."

Poor child, she was ravenous for even the poorest crumbs of comfort.

"It is terrible, Basil. When he wakes he does not know me. I tell him that I am here—Doris, his wife, who loves him so; but his eyes rest on me for a moment only, and then turn away; he does not speak to me—he does not even press my hand; I am nothing to him. Will it be always so, do you think? Will his memory be always a blank? He is not mad, you know; for he is calm, and he understands when the doctor comes round and speaks to him. But when he seems to look at me without thought of me in his eyes, it is very hard to bear, Basil—it wounds me to the heart. It is as though his mind were turned to stone. And yet last night he was talking in his sleep. I listened, for I thought he might be suffering; but no, there was a smile upon his lips, and it was my name he was murmuring—not once only, but again and again, 'Doris, Doris,' quite plainly, yet so sweetly and softly; it was just like the happy past come back again, and as though this dreadful present had never come to us. He sees me in his dreams, yet when he wakes he does not know me. Still it is

something that I am with him in his dreams. He is better, he is certainly better. Is it not so, Monsieur le Docteur?"

Dr. Sanson, a young man, with a pale, impassive, steadfast face of classical form, that looked like an ivory carving, paused for a moment beside the pallet; stooped down and placed a finger on Paul's wrist. Anxiously Doris searched the doctor's face; but it remained unchanged in expression.

The doctor's touch had been light enough, but it disturbed the sleeper. Paul shivered, sighed, then tried to turn upon his bed.

"He is better?" asked Doris.

"He has rested."

"Is it time?" Paul demanded dreamily.

"Where is the king to-night?"

"There is no king now in France," said the doctor.

"He is dead?"

"He has abdicated. He has fled the country. The Republic has been proclaimed."

"Vive la République!" He tried to rise. He pressed his hand over his eyes and forehead. "Where am I?"

"In the Palace of the Tuileries." Paul seemed to muse over this reply for some minutes.

"The Palace of the Tuileries," he repeated. Then he added in an abstracted way: "Strange that the exile of Soho should be lying here in the Tuileries. Has the late occupant of the Tuileries gone to live in Soho?"

"History repeats itself," said the doctor, sententiously. "Time brings about strange events. The king has returned to exile. It has been with Louis Philippe as with Charles Dix. When the king departs the exiles come home again."

"In the Palace of the Tuileries!"

"Have no fear. You are among friends," I repeat; "the Republic has been proclaimed."

"Friends?" Paul's eyes rested upon the hand of Doris, twined round his own; then his glance travelled upward. He was looking into her face at last, knowing it to be the face of his wife.

He trembled convulsively. It was as though his mind had by a violent effort regained its legitimate dominion. He stretched out eager, trembling hands; his face seemed to quiver with emotion; his lips moved—but for a moment he uttered no articulate sound.

"Doris!" he screamed at length, and in a moment he was straining her to his

heart, clasping her with fond, agitated arms; kissing her passionately, hiding his tearful face in her bosom.

The doctor went on his way. He returned some hours later, to find Doris still close beside her husband's pallet, their hands tightly locked together. They were silent; it was as though they were too happy to speak. Words might disturb the harmony of their love.

Paul was first to observe the presence of the doctor.

"I am dying," he said calmly. "I feel it—I know it."

"Heaven will decide," said the doctor.

"Paul—my own—my husband! live—live for me, and for our child!" Doris whispered.

Paul trembled; he drew her still nearer to him; but he still addressed himself to the doctor.

"This English lady is my wife, according to the law of England; I wish her to become my wife according to the law of France."

The doctor bowed his head.

"I am a peer of France," said Paul.

"I am the Marquis de Rouvray."

"Nobility has been abolished in France; titles have been declared illegal—they are inconsistent with the principles of the Revolution—with the safety of the Republic."

"The Republic cannot suppress the past, nor ignore truths, nor abolish facts. I am, I repeat, the Marquis de Rouvray. I do not regard the title. I have given proofs of my disregard. I have never before thus avowed my rank. I am true to the republican opinions of my father and my grandfather; all the same, I am a De Rouvray, and something is due to the sentiments of others. Titles are valued in England." A certain bitter smile crossed his face as he said this.—"Well, I bequeath my title to my son—if it is God's good pleasure that a son is to be born to come after me, and bear my name, yet never to look upon his father, or to know what a father's love is like."

"Paul, dearest!" cried Doris, in a voice of agony.

"Hush, Doris! let me speak while I may—while my mind is calm—my brain cool. Time grows short with me."

CHAPTER X. MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS.

"In what can I serve you?" asked Dr. Sanson.

"I desire to be reunited to this lady, my English wife, in accordance with the pro-

visions of the Code and the ordinances of the church. I think the authorities will not refuse the request of a dying man."

"They will not refuse. I presume to answer for them."

"Forgive me, Doris, that I have brought so much unhappiness upon your life. If you had never seen me!"

"Ah, Paul, if I had never seen you I should not know what it is to love—what it is to be happy."

Certain preliminary forms having been complied with, the mayor of the district, by indulgence of the Government, attended in the central pavilion of the Tuileries and duly conducted the civil ceremony of the marriage of Paul and Doris.

Surrounded by officials, the mayor sat in state beside the pallet of the wounded man, and in accordance with prescription, read aloud in an emphatic manner the admonitions or cardinal maxims of the Code Civil. First: The married owe to each other fidelity, comfort, assistance. Secondly: The husband owes protection to his wife, the wife obedience to her husband; and so on. Finally he pronounced: "In the name of the law, I declare that Paul, Marquis de Rouvray, and Mademoiselle Doris Doubleday are united by marriage."

A little later, and Paul was carried to the state chapel of the Tuileries, the religious ceremony of the marriage being solemnised by the Archbishop of Paris, in the presence of many witnesses. These included certain members of the Provisional Government, and groups of armed men, soldiers of the Revolution, who had fought upon the barricades, Republicans who had long struggled and plotted against the monarchy.

Paul's strength was failing fast. He winced and moaned when lifted from his pallet, the pain of his wounds was so acute, though he tried hard on Doris's account to restrain these confessions of suffering. Yet his voice did not lack decision when he took part in the ceremonies of his marriage. His signature in the register was bold and firm.

"You are now my wife, indeed, Doris," he said, as he leant back exhausted in her arms; "my wife by both French and English law and the rules of the church. But it is certain that you were truly my wife before, in my eyes, and in the sight of Heaven. It was right, however, that these forms should be observed, Doris, because of the world, for your sake, and for our child's that is to be."

"If a son be born of our marriage, let him be called Paul," he said, after an interval. "And when he is old enough to understand, tell him that his father, had life been permitted him, would have loved his child very dearly. He will love you, his mother, Doris, for how indeed could he do otherwise? If it be possible, I should wish him to love also his dead father. Teach him to respect my memory. Tell him, at least, that I died like a brave man, that I was faithful unto death to the cause of liberty and of France."

"My sense of duty has been mistaken, perhaps," he resumed presently; "I may have accepted too heedlessly the political sentiments and opinions handed down to me from the past—undertaken too impulsively labours beyond my strength to accomplish, and of a nature offensive to my humanity. Heaven will judge me mercifully. I clung to what seemed to me to be the right. If I have erred, I am paying the penalty with my life."

His voice grew weaker.

"Is it retribution?" he asked. "I returned to France to attempt the king's life; my death in his palace is the work of his soldiery. May we not cry quits? But I die leaving France a Republic."

"Basil, my brother—" but he could not continue. I understood, however, that he commended Doris to my care. He was too exhausted for further speech just then. He closed his eyes, and seemed to sleep for a while very tranquilly. He was so white and still, with his thin hands outstretched before him on the coverlet, that he looked already like one dead. But he stirred again; his eyes sought out Doris.

"Pray for me, my darling," he said in a whisper. "Hold my hand in yours. Let me know, let me feel that you are close beside me to the last. God bless you, my own wife. The end is not far off. Kiss me, dearest. Let my head rest on your bosom. Kiss me again when I am dead."

How beautiful looked the waxen face! It seemed as though the finger of death had smoothed away many of the lines and dints of care and suffering, and brought youth back to fill the place premature age had usurped. How refined and finished was the symmetrical Greek profile, the low broad brow, with its overarching, clustering curls, the sharply-shaped lips and nostrils, the firm round chin. The winter sun shone out for a little while: rays of dull gold falling upon the dead face

seemed as the saintly aureola of a missal picture.

Poor Doris!

A tender hand proffered her flowers culled from the conservatories of the palace to deck the bed of death. The hand was Lamartine's.

"No, though all be over," said Lamartine, "let her linger yet a little while. She loved him, and she loves him still. Her heart is with the dead, and the dead is with God. It were sacrilege to draw her back to earth just now."

The trees of liberty, planted in 1848, did not yield much fruit; indeed, they were scarcely allowed to take root in the earth at all. For speedily the days of February were followed by the days of June; and surely the terrible days of June, 1848, prepared the way for the days of December, 1851, for the coup d'état, and the violent re-establishment of the empire. Unfortunately, in France, liberty has a tendency towards disorder; while order inclines to tyranny. As a result, a saviour of society appears in time to shoot down French citizens in the streets, and to restore tranquillity by means of cannon-balls and bayonets. Peace, in France, is apt to bear a sword instead of an olive-branch; oftentimes her sandals and the hem of her white robes are splashed with blood.

To the days of February, England owed its 10th of April, 1848.

The fall of the French monarchy produced a general rocking of the Continent under the feet of its kings. Democracy indulged in much day-dreaming. The cause of the people seemed on the point of supreme triumph, everywhere. The wronged of France, Italy, and Germany were obtaining their rights, or striving hard to obtain them, from the hands of tyranny; were the working-classes of England to remain the while abject, mute, and passive? The example of France seemed to them worthy to be followed as promptly as might be. They were, indeed, not a little envious that France had been first to rise against its oppressors. A feeling prevailed that England should have led the way in that, as in other matters.

The joy of Mr. Grisdale and his readers, at the news from France, was very great.

"Of all the revolutions I have seen," said Mr. Grisdale, "I like this last the best. It has done the most, and cost the least."

To my thinking, however, the cost had been very considerable.

"In 1830, they did but drive away one king to bring in another," Mr. Grisdale continued; "they replaced a bigot by a charlatan. It was hardly worth doing. But now they have by far the best of the exchange; for in lieu of a king they possess a republic."

For my part, my recent experiences did not commend revolution to me. I thought with horror of certain of the scenes I had passed through. Was London to be as Paris had been? It was a terrible price to pay, even for the emancipation of a people. There still sounded in my ears the eternal rolling of the drums, the rattling of musketry, the hoarse songs and cries of the populace, the moaning and screaming of the wounded and the dying. I looked down and seemed to see the pavement slippery with blood, dreadful groups of bodies, flung together at random, strangely distorted—Death had petrified them as they writhed in their last agony—cruel havoc and rapine; the wicked work of fire and sword, degradation and destruction on all sides. I saw too, over and over again—it was a long time present to me with curious vividness—the spectacle of Paul's death in the Tuileries, and the despair of Doris as she rained tears and kisses upon the dead face of her husband.

"You are a young hand, you see, Basil," said Mr. Grisdale, to whom I had disclosed something of my sentiments concerning revolution; "and I think you have never been wholly with us. You are, perhaps, over-inclined to sympathy and sensitiveness, and I can well understand that what you have lately gone through in Paris has deeply affected you. The rising of a people in its wrath must cost something. Tyranny rarely goes down without a struggle. And—and it's too late now to object. The effort is really to be made."

His faith in the "ulterior measures," in the advantages of resort to physical force, was not, I think, so complete as it had been.

"I grow old," he said, with rather an air of apology, "and perhaps I begin to feel myself unfitted for scenes of violence. Much as I have advocated reform, and even revolution, I could almost be content now to let things go on as they have been going. But the word has been passed. I could not interpose timid counsels. I've spoken very boldly in my time, and I consider myself bound by my speeches. If I've stirred the popular anger, it's be-

cause I've been angry myself. If the people rise, I rise with them. The feeling is very strong against the Government. We've some unwise brethren amongst us, I grant you, but this hardly seems the right moment for exposing their unwisdom. Ireland is already in revolt. Read this in *The United Irishman*. Can you read it without a certain tingling of enthusiasm coming over you? 'Let the man amongst you who has no gun, sell his garment and buy one. Every street may be an excellent shooting-gallery for disciplined troops; but it is a better defile in which to entrap them. Chimney-pots, brickbats, logs of wood, mantelpieces, furniture, fireirons, &c., thrown vertically on the heads of a column below, from the elevation of a parapet or top story, are irresistible.' I confess I like less what follows, about such missiles as broken glass for maiming horses' feet, with such additions as boiling water or grease, cold vitriol and molten lead. But one thing's clear, Ireland is in earnest. We must be stirring, Basil. It's now or never. The time has come for action."

"Are you sure the country is with you?"

"There will be a rising in every town. The agricultural labourers will join us afterwards. The country is always rather behind the cities."

"Have you any plan of action?"

"We shall remain under arms until the Charter becomes the law of the land. If we are attacked we shall defend ourselves, and attack in our turn. I cannot tell you more at present. The art of street-fighting is better understood than it was, and Paris has set us a good example."

"But if the French king had employed his artillery?"

"We must do the best we can," said Mr. Grisdale, shrugging his shoulders. "I am prepared to meet artillery, if need be. Our numbers will be enormous; we shall come down upon the troops an overwhelming avalanche. And there may be disaffection in the army. Who knows? In these cases something must be left to chance. It will be like a great fire; it will spread far and wide; and now this building will catch, and now that, until flames will burst out in the most unexpected places. But why do you suggest these difficulties, Basil? You are not bound as I am. You have not been the spokesman, the representative of this cause for long, long years as I have. You can, if you will, withdraw from us without

shame. I cannot. I must go on to the end; be the end what it may. I could not hold back now if I would—and I would not if I could."

"I stand by you, old friend," I said. "Where you go I will go also. If there is to be danger we'll share it."

I read in Catalina's eyes approval of my decision. Perhaps desire to win her approval prompted my decision.

"Be it so, Basil," said Mr. Grisdale, with a curious look of irresolution upon his face. "It is not for me to counsel you. But I love you as though you were my own son; and I shall grieve indeed if trouble comes of your friendship for me. For I feel that you are rather true to me than to the cause. However, let's hope for the best. Who knows? In a few more hours the victory may be ours; the Charter won; or even a provisional government, with a view to a republic, established in England."

"Can you count upon your leaders?"

"Well, to tell the truth, we're rather short of leaders. 'The Thanes fly from us,' as Macbeth says. Pierce Plumer—but I never counted upon him—is on the Continent, they say; others are keeping in the background, to come forth if they perceive a real opening, not unless. They want the chestnuts out of the fire just as badly as we do, but they'd rather use our paws than their own. They'll claim the victory when we've won it; but they'll leave us to pay the penalty of defeat. Feargus remains stanch, however. They tell me he's stark mad; but he's a gentleman—an Irish gentleman—all the same."

Catalina whispered in my ear, "Will there really be danger?"

"I fear so." Her face was very pale.

"Help him if you can—promise me that."

"I promise. I shall not quit his side, whatever happens." She wrung my hand; but she spoke no word of regard for my safety.

It is certain that London had not been so completely scared, since the Pretender's army occupied Derby, and threatened to march southward.

The Court retreated to the country. The greatest captain of the age undertook the military defence of the capital. The public buildings and government offices were fortified to withstand a siege. More

than four thousand troops were assembled in the neighbourhood of Kennington, where the outbreak was appointed to commence; regiments of soldiers occupied other parts of London, and took possession of the river steamers, so as to move rapidly wherever the enemy might threaten attack. The superintendents of police met in conclave in Scotland-yard to determine their plan of action. The rising was to be repressed by strong measures.

A quarter of a million of special constables were enrolled. Business was suspended. The shopkeepers, sighing over the too probable fate of their plate-glass, closed their shutters. Their alarm and gloom were extreme. Still they tried to put faith in the Duke of Wellington. He was an old man, however; he had not drawn his sword for thirty years. It was doubted whether he would prove himself quite equal to the occasion.

By chance I encountered Nick.

"I hope you've quite done with this Chartist wickedness, Basil."

I informed him that my opinions had not altered; that I purposed taking part in the demonstration.

"Well, now, look here," he said severely, "I'm a special constable. I don't quite know what the law is, but I've a great mind to take you into custody on spec. You know you've no right to be a Chartist. The thing can't be allowed; you must be put down. Do you see this?"

He produced a policeman's truncheon from his coat-tail pocket.

"Now mind: if I chance to come across you in the course of to-morrow, and it becomes my duty to knock you over the head with this, I warn you that I'll do it without flinching; and it won't be my fault, I shall only be obeying orders. I shan't consider you as a brother then; I shall only look upon you as one of those confounded Chartists, and down you'll go! So I warn you, Basil. Good-bye."

Next Week will be published the Opening Chapter of

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

ENTITLED,

"IS HE POPENJOY?"

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTORY—NUMBER ONE.

I WOULD that it were possible so to tell a story, that a reader should beforehand know every detail of it up to a certain point, or be so circumstanced that he might be supposed to know. In telling the little novelettes of our life, we commence our narrations with the presumption that these details are borne in mind, and though they be all forgotten, the stories come out intelligible at last. "You remember Mary Walker. Oh yes, you do;—that pretty girl, but such a queer temper! And how she was engaged to marry Harry Jones, and said she wouldn't at the church-door, till her father threatened her with bread and water; and how they have been living ever since as happy as two turtle-doves down in Devonshire, till that scoundrel, Lieutenant Smith, went to Bideford! Smith has been found dead at the bottom of a saw-pit. Nobody's sorry for him. She's in a madhouse at Exeter; and Jones has disappeared, and couldn't have had more than thirty shillings in his pocket." This is quite as much as anybody ought to want to know, previous to the unravelling of the tragedy of the Joneses. But such stories as those I have to tell cannot be written after that fashion. We novelists are constantly twitted with being long; and to the gentlemen who condescend to review us, and who take up our volumes with a view to business rather than pleasure, we must be infinite in length and tedium. But the story must be made intelligible from the

beginning, or the real novel readers will not like it. The plan of jumping at once into the middle has been often tried, and sometimes seductively enough for a chapter or two; but the writer still has to hark back, and to begin again from the beginning—not always very comfortably after the abnormal brightness of his few opening pages; and the reader, who is then involved in some ancient family history, or long local explanation, feels himself to have been defrauded. It is as though one were asked to eat boiled mutton after woodcocks, caviare, or macaroni cheese. I hold that it is better to have the boiled mutton first, if boiled mutton there must be.

The story which I have to tell is something in its nature akin to that of poor Mrs. Jones, who was happy enough down in Devonshire till that wicked Lieutenant Smith came and persecuted her; not quite so tragic, perhaps, as it is stained neither by murder nor madness. But before I can hope to interest readers in the perplexed details of the life of a not unworthy lady, I must do more than remind them that they do know, or might have known, or should have known, the antecedents of my personages. I must let them understand how it came to pass that so pretty, so pert, so gay, so good a girl as Mary Lovelace, without any great fault on her part, married a man so grim, so gaunt, so sombre, and so old as Lord George Germain. It will not suffice to say that she had done so. A hundred and twenty little incidents must be dribbled into the reader's intelligence, many of them, let me hope, in such manner that he shall himself be insensible to the process. But unless I make each one of them understood and appre-

ciated by my ingenious, open-hearted, rapid reader—by my reader who will always have his fingers impatiently ready to turn the page—he will, I know, begin to masticate the real kernel of my story with infinite prejudices against Mary Lovelace.

Mary Lovelace was born in a country parsonage; but at the age of fourteen, when her life was in truth beginning, was transferred by her father to the deanery of Brotherton. Dean Lovelace had been a fortunate man in life. When a poor curate, a man of very humble origin, with none of what we commonly call Church interest, with nothing to recommend him but a handsome person, moderate education, and a quick intellect, he had married a lady with a considerable fortune, whose family had bought for him a living. Here he preached himself into fame. It is not at all to be implied from this that he had not deserved the fame he acquired. He had been active and resolute in his work, holding opinions which, if not peculiar, were at any rate advanced, and never being afraid of the opinions which he held. His bishop had not loved him, nor had he made himself dear to the bench of bishops generally. He had the reputation of having been in early life a sporting parson. He had written a book which had been characterised as tending to infidelity, and had more than once been invited to state dogmatically what was his own belief. He had never quite done so, and had then been made a dean. Brotherton, as all the world knows, is a most interesting little city, neither a Manchester nor a Salisbury; full of architectural excellences, given to literature, and fond of hospitality. The Bishop of Brotherton—who did not love the dean—was not a general favourite, being strict, ascetic, and utterly hostile to all compromises. At first there were certain hostile passages between him and the new dean. But the dean, who was, and is, urbanity itself, won the day, and soon became certainly the most popular man in Brotherton. His wife's fortune doubled his clerical income, and he lived in all respects as a dean ought to live. His wife had died very shortly after his promotion, and he had been left with one only daughter on whom to lavish his cares and his affection.

Now we must turn for a few lines to the family of Lord George Germain. Lord George was the brother of the Marquis of Brotherton, whose family residence was

at Manor Cross, about nine miles from the city. The wealth of the family of the Germain was not equal to their rank, and the circumstances of the family were not made more comfortable by the peculiarities of the present marquis. He was an idle, self-indulgent, ill-conditioned man, who found that it suited his tastes better to live in Italy, where his means were ample, than on his own property, where he would have been comparatively a poor man. And he had a mother and four sisters, and a brother with whom he would hardly have known how to deal had he remained at Manor Cross. As it was, he allowed them to keep the house, while he simply took the revenue of the estate. With the marquis I do not know that it will be necessary to trouble the reader much at present. The old marchioness and her daughters lived always at Manor Cross, in possession of a fine old house in which they could have entertained half the county, and a magnificent park—which, however, was let for grazing up to the garden-gates—and a modest income unequal to the splendour which should have been displayed by the inhabitants of Manor Cross.

And here also lived Lord George Germain, to whom at a very early period of his life had been entrusted the difficult task of living as the head of his family with little or no means for the purpose. When the old marquis died—very suddenly, and soon after the dean's coming to Brotherton—the widow had her jointure, some two thousand a year, out of the property, and the younger children had each a small settled sum. That the four ladies—Sarah, Alice, Susanna, and Amelia—should have sixteen thousand pounds among them, did not seem to be so very much amiss to those who knew how poor was the Germain family; but what was Lord George to do with four thousand pounds, and no means of earning a shilling? He had been at Eton, and had taken a degree at Oxford with credit, but had gone into no profession. There was a living in the family, and both father and mother had hoped that he would consent to take orders; but he had declined to do so, and there had seemed to be nothing for him but to come and live at Manor Cross. Then the old marquis had died, and the elder brother, who had long been abroad, remained abroad. Lord George, who was the youngest of the family, and at that time about five-and-twenty, remained at

Manor Cross, and became not only ostensibly but in very truth the managing head of the family.

He was a man whom no one could despise, and in whom few could find much to blame. In the first place he looked his poverty in the face, and told himself that he was a very poor man. His bread he might earn by looking after his mother and sisters, and he knew no other way in which he could do so. He was a just steward, spending nothing to gratify his own whims, acknowledging on all sides that he had nothing of his own, till some began to think that he was almost proud of his poverty. Among the ladies of the family, his mother and sisters, it was of course said that George must marry money. In such a position there is nothing else that the younger son of a marquis can do. But Lord George was a person somewhat difficult of instruction in such a matter. His mother was greatly afraid of him. Among his sisters Lady Sarah alone dared to say much to him; and even to her teaching on the subject he turned a very deaf ear. "Quite so, George," she said; "quite so. No man with a spark of spirit would marry a woman for her money"—and she laid a stress on the word "for"—"but I do not see why a lady who has money should be less fit to be loved than one who has none. Miss Barm is a most charming young woman, of excellent manners, admirably educated, if not absolutely handsome, quite of distinguished appearance, and she has forty thousand pounds. We all liked her when she was here." But there came a very black frown upon Lord George's brow, and then even Lady Sarah did not dare to speak again in favour of Miss Barm.

Then there came a terrible blow. Lord George Germain was in love with his cousin, Miss De Baron! It would be long to tell, and perhaps unnecessary, how that young lady had made herself feared by the ladies of Manor Cross. Her father, a man of birth and fortune, but not, perhaps, with the best reputation in the world, had married a Germain of the last generation, and lived, when in the country, about twenty miles from Brotherton. He was a good deal on the turf, spent much of his time at card-playing clubs, and was generally known as a fast man. But he paid his way, had never put himself beyond the pale of society, and was, of course, a gentleman. As to Adelaide De Baron, no

one doubted her dash, her wit, her grace, or her toilet. Some also gave her credit for beauty; but there were those who said that, though she would behave herself decently at Manor Cross and houses of that class, she could be loud elsewhere. Such was the lady whom Lord George loved, and it may be conceived that this passion was distressing to the ladies of Manor Cross. In the first place, Miss De Baron's fortune was doubtful, and could not be large; and then—she certainly was not such a wife as Lady Brotherton and her daughters desired for the one male hope of the family.

But Lord George was very resolute, and for a time it seemed to them all that Miss De Baron—of whom the reader will see much if he go through with our story—was not unwilling to share the poverty of her noble lover. Of Lord George personally something must be said. He was a tall, handsome, dark-browed man, silent generally, and almost gloomy, looking, as such men do, as though he were always revolving deep things in his mind, but revolving in truth things not very deep—how far the money would go, and whether it would be possible to get a new pair of carriage-horses for his mother. Birth and culture had given to him a look of intellect greater than he possessed; but I would not have it thought that he traded on this, or endeavoured to seem other than he was. He was simple, conscientious, absolutely truthful, full of prejudices, and weak-minded. Early in life he had been taught to entertain certain ideas as to religion by those with whom he had lived at college, and had therefore refused to become a clergyman. The bishop of the diocese had attacked him; but though weak, he was obstinate. The dean and he had become friends, and so he had learned to think himself in advance of the world. But yet he knew himself to be a backward, slow, unappreciative man. He was one who could bear reproach from no one else, but who never praised himself even to himself.

But we must return to his love, which is that which now concerns us. His mother and sisters altogether failed to persuade him. Week after week he went over to Baronscourt, and at last threw himself at Adelaide's feet. This was five years after his father's death, when he was already thirty years old. Miss De Baron, though never a favourite at Manor Cross, knew intimately the history of the family. The present marquis was over forty, and as yet

unmarried; but then Lord George was absolutely a pauper. In that way she might probably become a marchioness; but then of what use would life be to her, should she be doomed for the next twenty years to live simply as one of the ladies of Manor Cross? She consulted her father, but he seemed to be quite indifferent, merely reminding her that, though he would be ready to do everything handsomely for her wedding, she would have no fortune till after his death. She consulted her glass, and told herself that, without self-praise, she must regard herself as the most beautiful woman of her own acquaintance. She consulted her heart, and found that in that direction she need not trouble herself. It would be very nice to be a marchioness, but she certainly was not in love with Lord George. He was handsome, no doubt—very handsome—but she was not sure that she cared much for men being handsome. She liked men that “had some go in them,” who were perhaps a little fast, and who sympathised with her own desire for amusement. She could not bring herself to fall in love with Lord George. But then, the rank of a marquis is very high! She told Lord George that she must take time to consider.

When a young lady takes time to consider she has, as a rule, given way; Lord George felt it to be so, and was triumphant. The ladies at Manor Cross thought they saw what was coming, and were despondent. The whole country declared that Lord George was about to marry Miss De Baron. The country feared that they would be very poor; but the recompense would come at last, and the present marquis was known not to be a marrying man. Lady Sarah was mute with despair. Lady Alice had declared that there was nothing for them but to make the best of it. Lady Susanna, who had high ideas of aristocratic duty, thought that George was forgetting himself. Lady Amelia, who had been snubbed by Miss De Baron, shut herself up and wept. The marchioness took to her bed. Then, exactly at the same time, two things happened, both of which were felt to be of vital importance at Manor Cross. Miss De Baron wrote a most determined refusal to her lover, and old Mr. Tallowax died. Now old Mr. Tallowax had been Dean Lovelace's father-in-law, and never had a child but she who had been the dean's wife.

Lord George did in truth suffer dreadfully. There are men to whom such a

disappointment as this causes enduring physical pain—as though they had become suddenly affected with some acute and yet lasting disease. And there are men, too, who suffer the more because they cannot conceal the pain. Such a man was Lord George. He shut himself up for months at Manor Cross, and would see no one. At first it was his intention to try again, but very shortly after the letter to himself came one from Miss De Baron to Lady Alice, declaring that she was about to be married immediately to one Mr. Houghton; and that closed the matter. Mr. Houghton's history was well known to the Manor Cross family. He was a friend of Mr. De Baron, very rich, almost old enough to be the girl's father, and a great gambler. But he had a house in Berkeley-square, kept a stud of horses in Northamptonshire, and was much thought of at Newmarket. Adelaide De Baron explained to Lady Alice that the marriage had been made up by her father, whose advice she had thought it her duty to take. The news was told to Lord George, and then it was found expedient never to mention further the name of Miss De Baron within the walls of Manor Cross.

But the death of Mr. Tallowax was also very important. Of late the Dean of Brotherton had become very intimate at Manor Cross. For some years the ladies had been a little afraid of him, as they were by no means given to free opinions. But he made his way. They were decidedly high; the bishop was notoriously low; and thus, in a mild manner, without malignity on either side, Manor Cross and the Palace fell out. Their own excellent young clergyman was snubbed in reference to his church postures, and Lady Sarah was offended. But the dean's manners were perfect. He never trod on anyone's toes. He was rich, and, as far as birth went, nobody—but he knew how much was due to the rank of the Germaines. In all matters he obliged them, and had lately made the Deanery very pleasant to Lady Alice—to whom a widowed canon at Brotherton was supposed to be partial. The interest between the Deanery and Manor Cross was quite close; and now Mr. Tallowax had died, leaving the greater part of his money to the dean's daughter.

When a man suffers from disappointed love he requires consolation. Lady Sarah boldly declared her opinion—in female conclave of course—that one pretty girl is as good to a man as another, and might

be a great deal better, if she were at the same time better mannered and better dowered than the other. Mary Lovelace, when her grandfather died, was only seventeen. Lord George was at that time over thirty. But a man of thirty is still a young man, and a girl of seventeen may be a young woman. If the man be not more than fifteen years older than the woman the difference of age can hardly be regarded as an obstacle. And then Mary was much loved at Manor Cross. She had been a most engaging child, was clever, well-educated, very pretty, with a nice sparkling way, fond of pleasure, no doubt, but not as yet instructed to be fast. And now she would have at once thirty thousand pounds, and in course of time would be her father's heiress.

All the ladies at Manor Cross put their heads together—as did also Mr. Canon Holdenough, who, while these things had been going on, had been accepted by Lady Alice. They fooled Lord George to the top of his bent, smoothing him down softly amidst the pangs of his love, not suggesting Mary Lovelace at first, but still in all things acting in that direction. And they so far succeeded that within twelve months of the marriage of Adelaide De Baron to Mr. Houghton, when Mary Lovelace was not yet nineteen and Lord George was thirty-three, with some few gray hairs on his handsome head, Lord George did go over to the Deanery and offer himself as a husband to Mary Lovelace.

A PATCHWORK PEOPLE.

FREDERICK THE GREAT was as fond of catching colonists as his father was of entrapping tall grenadiers. The difference was that the former didn't in the least care what country they came from, while the latter preferred that they should be Germans, or at least should know German enough to understand what their officers said. A whole villageful might speak Bohemian, Polish, Greek, it mattered not what, provided they seemed likely to increase and multiply, and fill up the gaps which the Thirty Years' War and other troubles had left in his Prussian Majesty's dominions.

How well those gaps have been filled up may be inferred from this one fact—Frederick, on coming to the throne, found himself lord of less than two millions and a half of people, scattered over two thousand one

hundred and forty-five square miles. Nowadays the one province of Brandenburg, covering seven hundred and thirty-four square miles, contains nearly three million inhabitants. This unparalleled increase is owing to the beginnings made by Frederick the Great. He gave the population a start, introducing into Brandenburg at least one hundred thousand immigrants, besides fully as many more into the rest of the kingdom. Hence it follows that the Prussians are not pure Germans. Even in Brandenburg, the kernel of the monarchy, there is a large mixture of foreign blood. This may account for that peculiar "cockiness," which most travellers abroad have felt and resented, and which is so different from the suavity of the Austrian, the straightforward gentlemanliness of the Hanoverian, and the heavy good-nature of the Bavarian. The Prussians are the Yankees of the Old World, made up of half-a-dozen breeds, as the Yankee is made up of English, Irish, German, with a dash of Dutch and French. And just as the Yankees "whip creation," the Prussians are not satisfied without "whipping" the rest of Europe.

The French are very fond of insisting on this mixture of races, forgetting that they too are a composite people. It seems to console them under defeat to reflect that they were not beaten by a single nation, but by half-a-dozen nations rolled into one. M. de Quatrefages, the naturalist, indignant that the German shells did so much harm to his pet *Jardin des Plantes*, wrote a book on *La Race Prussienne*, in which he brought forcibly out the influence of the vast French Huguenot immigration, when Louis the Fourteenth was mad enough to revoke the edict of Nantes. There are whole villages near Berlin, he says, where the type of face is French, and not German. M. Lavissee, in an interesting account of "the colonising kings of Prussia," says the same thing, remarking that the people with French names and French features are the most pronounced in their Germanism. One Berlin professor in 1870 went so far as to publicly ask forgiveness from God and man for the sin of bearing a French name. There is indeed something in the petty cantankerousness of an ill-humoured Prussian official like the worrying of a waspish Frenchman—for Frenchmen can be waspish. But whether the French element counts for much or little, the foreign element in Prussia is undoubtedly strong. M. Lavissee takes a pleasure in

proving it from Prussian authorities, notably from the "Hohenzollernsche Colonisationen," lately published by Dr. Max Beheim-Schwarzbach.

It is amusing to see how eager Frederick was to get colonists, and how cynically unscrupulous in getting them. He had two special agencies, one at Frankfort, for South Germany, the other at Hamburg, for the North. The duty of the latter was to stop all emigrants to America, and point out to them that his Prussian majesty's dominions were the real land of promise. Besides these there were secret agents in all the countries where Frederick's advertisements were not allowed to circulate. These men got a bonus on every colonist—three dollars for an unmarried workman, five for a man and his wife. Every advantage was taken of the troubles of the times. No sooner did news come of any religious persecution, than the agents flew to the place where it raged, representing that Prussia was a very paradise of civil and religious liberty. Thus, in 1712, unhappy Poland—she was unhappy even then—had added active intolerance to her chronic anarchy. The nobles had all been trained by the Jesuits, and persecution and imprisonment became the order of the day. "Now's the time," wrote the agent at Glogau, "for your Majesty to make Silesia profit by these troubles. If you will only set up in a village on the Polish frontier a Protestant church, where there shall be service in Polish, you'll draw the people across by hundreds. It wouldn't cost much—it may be as plain as a barn; there need not even be doors to it. The thing is to have a church. And even if a good many do finally remain in Poland, they will have enriched your Majesty by spending a good round sum every Sunday on beer and brandy." In 1747 there was a terrible famine in Bohemia. Frederick, as soon as he hears of it, writes to say how much he pities the poor hungry people, obliged to eat bread that is mostly sawdust, and how he hopes his subjects along the frontier will profit by the disaster to draw some of the sufferers over to his dominions. So, when Lissa is burnt down for the third time within a century, "Can't we do something there?" writes Frederick; and forthwith he publishes in Polish and German a proclamation, which, beginning with a few words of condolence, goes on to say: "We have heard that some of those thus rendered houseless are desirous of emigrating to Silesia," and points

out the privileges which he awards to his colonists. There was always something somewhere to make people restless—anarchy in Poland; chronic misgovernment in little states like Mecklenburg, whose budgetless potentates ruined themselves and their dominions by imitating Louis the Fourteenth, and keeping up a miniature Versailles—something of which Frederick and his crimps were not slow to take advantage. Often the various sovereigns laid complaints. "Your way of acting," wrote the Elector of Saxony, "is dead against all the rules of good neighbourhood. I hope the thing will be entirely put a stop to." He hoped in vain; for Frederick simply told his agents to go on just the same, but to be very careful how they compromised themselves or him. "Circulate the handbills. Above all, look out for well-to-do families, but don't seem too eager; let them think it's nothing to you, and never do or say anything that their Governments can take hold of." So the Elector had to content himself with publishing furious edicts, threatening "grievous punishment, even death in some cases," against the agents. "On the least suspicion let them be taken by the neck." None were ever taken, and the flitting across the border went on as merrily as ever.

With Poland, Frederick did not even take the pains to be civil. There his agents had neither shame nor concealment. "The recruiting goes on apace," wrote one of them. And when some of the Polish lords tried to stop with the strong hand the departure of their most valuable serfs, Frederick sent three regiments across the frontier, and thus, advancing as far as Posen, swept up the runaways, and beat off with loss a handful of Poles who tried to hinder them. This was in 1769, when Prussia was at peace with Poland; but the excuse was that the regiments were escorting a large purchase of cavalry horses; and any excuse was good enough for the Poles.

That was the way in which Frederick the Second carried out his maxim, that "the peasant is the nursing-father of society." All his aim was to get the largest number of profitable colonists at the least cost. Very often the zeal of his agents wanted stirring up. Then the authorities of the favoured districts were not always pleased to receive "new blood," for which they were expected to pay. "No use looking to me for expenses," writes the king, "I'm

as poor as Job;" or else he says, "I've got the earache to-day, and can't hear what you say. You must find the money." Frederick was not the man to be disobeyed; and when he wrote accusing village big-wigs of having "joined in a hellish plot to ill-treat the colonists, whom I, in my fatherly solicitude, am placing among you," we may imagine there was a rivalry as to who should put most sugar on the immigrants' bread and butter. The immigrants did not always repay the pains spent on them. A good many got their travelling expenses twice over; some even managed to run away and re-enlist several times, getting each time their bounty-money over again. Others thought that they had done enough in coming, and had no idea of working for a livelihood. They gave themselves the airs of people of consequence, and we may imagine the puzzle-headed condition to which the Rath or Ober-rath of a Silesian township was reduced, between Frederick urgent on the one hand, and the colonists idle, drunken, and impudent, on the other. One day, a specially-favoured colonist told the king to his face, that he was going to pack, and take his family somewhere where he had better prospects. "You're quite in the right of it, my good fellow," replied Frederick; "I'd go too if I knew of any place where I should have a better chance than here." Nevertheless, desertions made him very angry. "How shall we stop them?" asked the unhappy functionaries; "shall we make them take an oath to stay?" "What's the use of that?" he replied, "there are oaths enough broken, without breaking more. Hold a review of them twice a week; and, I'll tell you what, whenever a man deserts, the local magistrates shall pay what it cost me to get him into the country." He was not very particular about the character of his immigrants. "I can't expect the first generation," said he, "to be any great things; but I'm working for posterity, and our discipline will make good, useful Prussians of their children." He was right. Silesia, for instance, into which he enticed more than sixty thousand colonists, has become pretty completely Germanised, having been, before Frederick seized it, a despised Slavonic province of Austria. Even in Brandenburg, he found gaps to be filled up. "How are you off for room?" he wrote; "are the ruins of the Thirty Years' War all repaired?" "Yes," was the reply, "but we might take say one hundred and eleven families, about five hundred and

fifty people." Frederick, in the ten years after 1740, found room by draining marshes, embanking rivers, &c. for fifty thousand, and, as we saw, by the end of his reign, he could boast of having introduced at least one hundred thousand colonists into the old patrimony of his house. Silesia, bandied about in the Middle Ages between the different Slavonic kingdoms, came under the power of Austria in 1526, when the Hapsburgs got the crown of Bohemia. As M. Lavissee observes, what a different history Europe would have had, if Austria, instead of weakening herself hopelessly by stretching out after her Spanish, Italian, and Flemish possessions, had concentrated her strength on Bohemia and Silesia. Then she, instead of Prussia, might have Germanised Silesia to her own profit, aye, and Bohemia too, for we must remember that, till the House of Brandenburg took them in hand, even the lower valleys of the Elbe and Oder were almost as Slavonic as the upper. With a strong German power in the south-east, Austria might have pushed westward, quietly annexing Bavaria, which the Prussians would not let her annex in 1779; while Silesia, stretching northward between Berlin and Posen, would have effectually hindered Prussian advance to the eastward. But it was not to be; the Hapsburgs neglected Silesia in a most shameful way; so that, when Charles the Sixth died, and Frederick, leaping from his sick-bed, left his ministers to concoct a few diplomatic lies, and swooped down on the province, he was able not only to conquer it in a month, but to get hold of it once and for ever. Everything was changed; instead of two thousand ill-disciplined, ill-conditioned, brigandish troops, Frederick at once fixed the permanent army of Silesia at forty thousand, as highly disciplined as if they were on the eve of a battle. The fortresses were all tumbling to pieces; they were at once put in a state of defence. Books had been almost unknown before, the censorship at Vienna was worse than the Papal Index; Frederick at once poured in bale upon bale of literature, and the Silesians could scarcely believe their eyes when they read, in some of the books thus suddenly provided for them, jokes upon and sharp critiques about their new lord and master. Of course, the taxes rose a little; but then they were more equally divided. Above all, they were in the main spent in the country, instead of being carried off bodily to Vienna; out of three and a quarter millions of

thalers, the king only took away seventeen thousand. Silesia had been a stronghold of religious dissensions. Under Austria, the Romanists, of course, had had the upper hand; when the Prussians came in, the Protestants hoped that the day of vengeance had dawned. The day after the battle of Landshut, two thousand peasants came and "begged to be allowed the small favour of putting to death all the Papists in the neighbourhood." Frederick, for once in his life, quoted Scripture: "Love your enemies," cried he, "bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." The peasants went off considerably quieted, we may hope not unedified. "Liberty of conscience to all alike," was his rule. All he did was to cut down the holydays and shorten the pilgrimages. He even left the prince-bishop of Breslau the right of coining money.

As for colonisation, there was ample space for it in the farms, estates, whole villages, deserted since the Thirty Years' War, in the towns with one or more quarters fallen into ruin. The immigration agents worked well; and, before the Seven Years' War began, Silesia had received a very large number of linen-weavers and others, who soon rebuilt the ruined villages. Silesia suffered much in the Seven Years' War; hence Frederick was doubly anxious to start there all kinds of improvements. His correspondence with the governor of Silesia is that of a great landowner with his steward. "Look," says he, "if there is not a good deal of paying work to be done in the way of marsh-draining or something of that sort. I'm pretty nearly sure that round Oppeln, for instance, you might find plenty of what I mean." "No," was the official reply, "your Majesty is misinformed. Round Oppeln is nothing but a peat-bog; you could not feed a man off six acres of it." "Give it a little more thought," answered the king, "and keep in hand money enough, in case you find something can be done." Next year the king was at it again. "How can you reply so perfunctorily? Get the district surveyed by people who understand something of farming." Frederick was right, as usual, as anyone may see who looks at the present state of the once peat-bog round Oppeln. But if the functionaries were kept up to the mark, so were the nobles. "Make a village," was the king's advice to any one who wished either to stand well at

court and win a higher title, or who, having got into trouble, was anxious to be restored to favour. "What a lot of fine villages you might have if you'd cut down some of your huge forests, count," said Frederick to Count Posadowski, and then he went on detailing all his own colonising plans, saying that he would get settlers if the count would give them room. Posadowski, who wanted nothing less than the destruction of his timber, said nothing, just throwing in a "yes" now and then when politeness seemed to exact it. It was enough for the king that he did not say "no." Frederick at once went off to another Silesian nobleman, and finding him not at once impressed with the beauties and desirableness of turning his woods into villages, "Why," said he, "Posadowski's going to do it. He saw the thing at once." And Posadowski had to do it. Very soon an official letter came inviting him to "send in a report on his projects of colonisation." If a nobleman really had not money, it was lent to him; but villages the king would have—"well built, with a good house set apart for the schoolmaster."

West Prussia, too—Frederick's share in the first partition of Poland, "My little bit of anarchy," as he cynically called it—needed a great deal to bring it up to the Hohenzollern standard. When Frederick took the country it certainly had not much culture, whether Teutonic or Slavonian. The official report on the Netze district speaks of degenerate breeds of cattle, worn-out fields covered with stones and weeds, woods gone to ruin through wasteful cutting, meadows turned into swamp. "The cottages are miserable huts of mud and straw; most of the towns are in ruins; the use of an iron ploughshare is unknown. Yet there are burial-grounds, which show that in the days of the Teutonic knights there was a large thriving population." Frederick at once built schools, abolished serfdom, made all equal before the law, gave large grants to the towns, lent freely to the nobles, distributed seed-corn, and brought in a breed of horses from Dessau, and one of goats from Spain. Within a year the king could tell Voltaire that his "morsel of anarchy" was as well governed as the rest of the kingdom; that twenty square miles of marsh had been well drained; that there was a canal bringing the Vistula and Netze into communication with the Oder and Elbe; above all, that police had been

brought in where even the name had been heretofore unknown. The canal cost seven hundred and forty thousand thalers, and was completed in sixteen months, six thousand men working at it night and day. In the summer of 1773 Frederick, to his great joy, saw vessels that had been loaded on the Oder sail down the Vistula. On one town, Culm, which was in a most deplorable state, he spent money by handfuls—more than seventy-three thousand thalers for a complete set of shoemakers, tailors, masons, &c. &c., the pick of a whole year's crop of colonists. The total sum spent on the place exceeded a quarter of a million thalers—a good sum, when we think of the value of money more than a century ago in Germany; but it was well spent, for Culm became a flourishing town. Bromberg, in like manner, which Frederick found with only eight hundred people, was so effectually set going that it now numbers thirty thousand.

When we reflect on the vast immigration of Huguenots and others under Frederick's predecessors, and remember, too, that in his reign of forty-six years Frederick the Second brought in at least three hundred thousand colonists, we feel that Prussia deserves to be called a patchwork kingdom. They calculate that in 1786 at least a third of the total population were colonists or their children. There is no parallel to this in modern history.

Naturally all were fish who came to such a wholesale fisherman's net. Of French, unlike his predecessors, he got only a few; of Italians many, who set up as pastrycooks and haberdashers. Greeks he was very anxious to bring in, believing, like Mr. Gladstone, in the excellence of the "Hellenic race." He had a curious correspondence with a Greek bishop on the subject, and sent several agents to Venice; but the Greeks were shy of coming so far north, so he tried the gipsies, whom he had at first persecuted, stringing them up to the gallows, both men and women, whenever they were caught on Prussian soil. He found them useful as spies; used them, too, to gather rags for his paper-mills, and settled them in colonies, where their descendants still retain the gipsy type and gipsy tricks. Other still earlier settlers are even now recognisable here and there. The Salzburghers, who before Frederick the Second's time had come en masse, fleeing in the depth of winter from the mad intolerance

of their prince-bishop, still keep in part of East Prussia their dialect and their old popular songs. The Wurtembergers, settled in West Prussia, are distinguishable at a glance from the bigger, stouter, lighter-haired "natives." They, too, keep their old dialect, in spite of the schoolmaster. Close to Berlin, in the little town of Rixdorf, there is a colony of old Hussites—"Bohemian brethren" they style themselves—who, persecuted everywhere, at last found liberty of conscience at Brandenburg. They still talk Bohemian among themselves, sing Czech hymns, and read the old Hussite Bible. They and their Calvinist and Lutheran fellow-townsmen quarrelled at first a great deal, amusing themselves by comparing one another to the beast and his friends in Revelation. They have now calmed down; but Rixdorf is still two towns. In one street, as you walk along at night, you are greeted with "gute Nacht," in the next with the Bohemian "dobré noc."

Of the French Huguenot colonies there are still many traces. Till 1819 there were seven churches in Berlin where the service was wholly in French. Thenceforward, till 1830, the two languages were used alternately. Even now they still preach in French once or twice a year. At Ziethen there is quite a French colony, which, far away from big towns, has kept its distinctiveness. "Father" there is "pir;" "mother," "mir;" "bed," "kutsche," &c. The proper names are Germanised French: Dipppo (Dupont); Villing (Vilain); Irrbenk (Urbain), &c.

Ruppin, in the very heart of Brandenburg, only a few leagues from Berlin, is another French colony; though there and elsewhere names like Lacroix, Sauvage, &c., have been generally translated. M. de Quatrefages reckons up a list of Prussian notables, who, like our Fonblanques, Romillys, &c., were "Edict of Nantes men." The Humboldts, he says, were French on the mother's side; and even the Emperor of Germany has Huguenot blood in his veins, for Frederick William married the grand-daughter of Coligny. M. Beheim-Schwarzbach says: "You can tell the descendants of a Huguenot almost to a dead certainty. They generally have chestnut hair, sharp dark eyes, long taper fingers, quite unlike the coarse fat fingers of the Germans. Yet they are not Frenchmen; there is a calm, sometimes a cast of sadness, over the face, which is wholly German." M. de Quatrefages can catch,

amid the "precious balms" with which Emperor William was fond of "breaking the heads" of his conquered foes, what he calls "the distant echo of our old religious wars, with their undying legacy of hatred." He says, too, that the children of the Huguenots, speaking French like Frenchmen, were infinitely useful during the war. "They passed for Frenchmen, went everywhere, heard everything, preached insubordination, and worked out the Nemesis of Louis the Fourteenth's cruel folly." M. Lavissee simply remarks that the only "German" with whom he had an angry word during a recent tour in Prussia was one of these "Berlin-Frenchmen."

The Prussians, therefore, are a patchwork people. In the Middle Ages, monks, merchants, runaway serfs in search of freeholds, knights anxious to carve out fiefs in heathendom, all did something towards Germanising what is now called Prussia. Brandenburg got to have a dialect of its own, the Mark or Border-speech, of the capabilities of which Luther boasts in his Table-talk. The Thirty Years' War stopped this progress for a time, but it went on again under Frederick the Second's immediate predecessors, and he himself gave, as we have seen, the finishing touch to it; and now the compact way in which the Prussian patchwork holds together must be a marvel to those who compare it with Austria, for instance. Surely the Hohenzollerns, who brought colonists and took so much pains in acclimatising them, deserved to succeed better than selfish ruffians like the princes of Hesse, who, with Frederick's example before them, could find nothing better to do with their subjects than to sell them to George the Third, to be food for powder in America. "Prussia," says M. B.-Schwarzbach, "is a living organism. Guided by the need of keeping itself alive, it drew in and assimilated everything that came near it, repairing its losses as the maimed zoophyte puts out a new arm; and at last surprising the world by the strength which it had been quietly gathering."

Some physiologists declaim against mixed races. "They always have bad teeth," says an Anglo-Irish friend, explaining in that way an hereditary defect. But, teeth or no teeth, mixture seems to have answered well in Prussia. Prussia had, what some mixed populations have lacked, a good "paternal system," under which the crudities of the patchwork speedily disappeared. As M. de Quatrefages says, they were all Prussians

together. The progress has been steady, for each successive prince has pulled with a will in the same direction. In this way Berlin, which in the great Elector's day had six thousand people, had risen to sixty-nine thousand at the time of Frederick the Second's accession. Fifteen years later it numbered nearly one hundred and ten thousand, and we know what its population is now. Towns do grow more quickly in America, but Prussia is in Europe; and besides, the progress has been steady, and bids fair to be continuous.

BETWEEN THE LINES.

SING the song of the singer, merrily ring the rhymes,
Light is the lay they tell us, light as its echoed
chimes;

Sing the song of the singer, mocking at doubt and
fear,

Catch the joy of its melody, let its daring beauty
cheer;

Well that the mellow music may bear no hidden
signs

Of the broken heart of the poet, written between the
lines.

Watch the part of the player, bravely and deftly
done,

See the difficult height attained, the loud applauses
won;

Weep with his passionate sorrow, thrill to his pas-
sionate bliss,

Blending your joyous laughter with that happy laugh
of his;

Well that his marvellous acting, dazzles, wins,
refines

Who thinks of the desperate effort, written between
the lines?

See the work of the painter, in colouring rare and
rich,

Give it its well-won homage, choose it the choicest
niche;

Hang it where it may render, as an artist's best
can do,

Companionship in its beauty, delicate, pure, and
true!

Well that its silent loveliness, softness and thought
combines;

None read the bitter baffling strife, written between
the lines.

Watch the path of the prosperous, sunny, and smooth,
and bright,

Health and wealth to give it its full of sweetness
and of light;

See how the easy future is planned for the careless
feet,

Given each slight desire, flattered each vague conceit.
Well that the outward surface, gladness and peace

enshrines;

Who knows the tale of the skeleton, written between
the lines?

If the singer dies in solitude, his songs sigh on as
sweetly;

If the statesman has a hearth disgraced, does he face
the world less metely?

So the artist's touch is fine and sure, who heeds the
hand that guides it?

Does the player feel a fading life? his miming, mask-
ing, hide it.

Cypress, and rose, and laurel, Fate's reckless hand
entwines;

Life reads the printed story—Death writes between
the lines.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER XI. A DEMONSTRATION.

IN a large gallery in the Adelphi, Mr. Leveridge's pictures have been assembled for exhibition, that his name may be the more regarded among men, and his reputation descend to future generations. The works, lent by various proprietors, amply demonstrate the painter's great industry, his technical excellence, his fine sense of colour; there is proof, too, of his poetic taste and invention. The collection comprises numerous Eves and Venuses, Psyches and Galateas, Nymphs and Sirens. During his long career as a painter he had assiduously studied both sacred and profane history in search of subjects.

"It's a fine show altogether," says the painter, simply, "and it does me credit, though I say so that perhaps should not say so. Here are my best pictures, or nearly so, for some are absent—my Hero on Leander's body for instance, I could wish that were here, and my Aurora; the owner refused to lend it because the room isn't fireproof. The world will see that at any rate I haven't been idle, and I think they'll add that I know something about my art. My career's pretty well over; my hand grows infirm. I shan't be able to do much more. This exhibition is like the feu-de-joie that ends the fireworks. I shall only trifle and twaddle in the future. I can accomplish no more great works. Well, well, perhaps I've done enough. They look well, don't they? and they've worn well. You see they are all honestly and simply painted. I have never tried after new vehicles or fantastic experiments. Cold-drawn linseed oil, with a little spirits of turpentine, that's what I've used chiefly and found answer very well. It keeps the flesh tints very pure, as you see."

He received the hearty congratulations of his friends and brother-artists.

"It's like an instalment of posthumous fame, paid on account," he said pleasantly. "I am able to grasp the collected result of my life's labours. I was nervous yesterday; the anxiety and fatigue of completing the exhibition told upon me a good deal. I am at peace to-day; I'm entirely satisfied. I sit here very happy, surrounded by my children."

"A large family for an old bachelor," said the friend to whom he spoke.

"Well, yes," Mr. Leveridge added, with a sigh, "an old bachelor, as you say. Heaven has so willed it, and I may not repine. I leave no children of flesh and blood; I must be content with these of paint and canvas."

"I count this exhibition a great triumph," he said upon another occasion; "it sets me right with the public. They'll know me better than they did. My reputation seems more securely established. In truth these pictures are the title-deeds of my fame."

"Written on a good many skins," observed a bystander.

The painter seemed broken in health somewhat, but he visited his exhibition daily, bestowing fond glances upon his earlier performances, counting the landmarks of his career, pointing out the Venus that first brought him into notice, the Juno that won him entrance to the Academy, and so on. "I think even poor Deborah would have taken pride in the exhibition," he said. "It might have shocked her a little—the poor thing, to do her justice, was easily shocked—but it would have pleased her, too; at any rate she would have liked to read about it and all the kind things said of me in the newspapers."

It was a proof of growing infirmity, that his delight in the collection soon yielded to anxiety for its dispersion. He became eager that the pictures should be restored to their owners. A sense of responsibility weighed heavily upon him; he became alarmed for the safety of his works. What if flames were to break out, and destroy in five minutes the labour of some fifty years? What if thieves were to break in, and pilfer the choicer treasures of the gallery? It was dreadful to think of. And he complained that he could not sleep at night for thinking of such catastrophes, that they haunted his dreams and distressed him exceedingly.

"I shall be glad when it's over, Basil," he said to me. "Indeed it seems to me that my life might well close now, while people are speaking and writing kindly of me, while my fame is fresh, and the world's applause is ringing in my ears. I've been thinking so these many days past, until I have almost persuaded myself that my final hour draws near. In truth I'm like an old soldier, with my knapsack packed, and my arms and accoutrements all neat and trim, simply waiting for my orders to march. Let this be a secret between us.

I've made my will, Basil. I'm a childless old man. I leave no kinsfolk behind me, so I've made you my heir, Basil, that is, nominally, you understand. There's not so much money as people fancy—in these cases there never is quite so much money as people fancy—yet there's a tidy sum all the same. I want to help you, Basil, and in a degree I should like to help Nick; but only in a degree, for Nick has always seemed to me a young man very well able to take care of himself. He'll push on, without heeding those he pushes against, or pushes down and passes over. But mainly I want to help Doris."

The tears came into his eyes as he mentioned her name.

"I don't think she has ever known how fondly I loved her. Well, well, I won't speak of that. I'll only say that she is dear to me still, very dear. But things happened adversely, and I forgot everything but my love and acted selfishly and very, very foolishly. I can't—she would not let me—help her as I should like to help her. Poor Doris is proud. She thinks she has wronged me, and it would pain her, it would be humiliation to her, therefore, to accept aid from me. She could not bear it, I know. Well, you must stand in my place, Basil. It's my trustee I wish you to be rather than my heir. She'll let you help her, though she won't let me. And—help her in spite of herself, there's a dear boy. She need never know it's with my money you're helping her. For I don't mean you to wait until I'm dead and gone. The poor thing needs help forthwith. Only tell me what to do for Doris and count it done, Basil. You understand me?"

Doris was again in England. Her sufferings had been very great, but she bore the journey well.

The remains of Paul, as one of the victims of the days of February, had been interred in the vaults beneath the Column of July. The Republic had decreed funeral honours to the slain. The rites were solemnised in the church of the Madeleine. A grand procession marched solemnly from the Hôtel de Ville to the Place de la Bastille, while the troops presented arms, the crowds in the streets bared their heads, the songs of the Revolution were chanted on all sides, the muffled drums rolled ceaselessly, and the bands of the National Guards and the regiments of the line played mournful music.

It was at her own request that Doris

was brought back to the lodgings in the New-road.

"Our home was here," she said with plaintive simplicity.

She was told that Mr. Leveridge greatly wished to see her.

"Let him come," she said; "he shall be welcome. He is a very old friend. I can remember him so long back, ever since I was the tiniest child, and I find myself clinging to the past; the present is so sad, and the future is such a blank."

She was much agitated, however, and her face was dreadfully pale when I brought him to her. She rose, in her black dress, and advanced to meet him.

"My child, my child!" he cried. The sight of her sufferings, of her widow's dress, of the lines of care traced upon her face, seemed to wound him cruelly.

"Mr. Leveridge," she said, with the air of one nerving herself to make a confession she had long looked forward to making, "I did you grave injustice in the past—I acted towards you with a wicked thoughtlessness—no one knows that better than I do now; no one could be more anxious to make confession of it. Alas! I can make you no amends. But what is past is past. But if ever you wished that I should be punished for my sins against you, your wish has been sorely gratified. Look at me! Have I not been punished enough? My heart is broken!"

"My child, my child, I never wished it."

"No, no; you did not—you could not!"

And overcome with her tears she fell fainting towards him. He caught her in his arms.

"My Doris, my poor, poor child Doris!" he said again and again. Presently he whispered to me: "Your mother looked just like this, but a little while before she died."

If the people had risen. But they did not rise. Their disaffection had been exaggerated, or their faith in The Charter was far from complete. The 10th of April came and went, yet the British Constitution remained unchanged.

London began forthwith to laugh at its fright. It went behind the ghost, as it were, and perceived that it had been terrified by such simple means as a white sheet, a broomstick, a scooped-out turnip with a lighted candle stuck in it. There had been nothing really more alarming.

In truth the failure was most absolute.

The cause of the People's Charter perished pitifully, ignominiously, ludicrously.

There was a grand procession of leaders, orators, and delegates; of bands, and vans, and banners; of column after column of men of the artisan class, marching shoulder to shoulder, brave of bearing and defiant of look. And with these came in their thousands the worthless and mischievous, and predatory hordes of London—the scum and refuse of a great city, intent on their own infamous and savage ends. It was thus rather a mob than an army that advanced through the streets, crossed the bridges, and passing out of Middlesex into Surrey, proceeded to Kennington-common, the appointed scene of demonstration. But then a mob, rather than an army, had accomplished the French Revolution!

There were occasional cheers from idlers and lookers-on, with some laughter and ridicule; but there was little real sympathy. Even the most lenient of our judges held that we were endangering the public peace, without sufficient excuse. Our appeal to physical force had not only alienated many of our political friends, but had arrayed against us the energy and military strength of the Government. We encountered no opposition, however; not a soldier, nor a policeman, was to be seen.

There was something ominous about the absence of all interference. Were we to be led into an ambuscade? Must we prepare for a sudden onslaught of the soldiery? Were we to be the victims of another Peterloo?

Soon information spread that artillery, cavalry, and infantry, in overwhelming force and ready for immediate action, were assembled in the neighbourhood. The demonstration was thus subjected to a very depressing influence.

The meeting was duly held, however. The vans were ranged together to form a platform for the orators and their friends; and harangues more or less violent in quality were successively delivered. But the crowd listened with preoccupied thoughts and averted gaze; they were for ever looking over their shoulders in expectation of the arrival of cavalry upon the scene. A sense of failure was present generally; all felt baffled and discomfited. Many turned their steps homeward; the mass melted, the mob dispersed.

Then the rain fell heavily—as though the occasion needed further damping! Chartism was fairly washed away—for ever. Great laughter ensued, as I have said:

and those who had feared the most laughed the loudest.

The matter may be now judged from a distance and dispassionately. To my thinking the people had legitimate reason for complaint—endured much injustice, suffered many hardships, which Parliament was then too inert and opinionated, ignorant and selfish, to remedy. The appeal to physical force failed, however, as it deserved to fail. And Chartism, considered as a panacea, was found to be of no more worth than many other political quack medicines.

Chartism perished—but not before, as I hold, it had wrought genuine good, and had really served its turn. I lay no stress upon the fact, that certain of its six points were afterwards calmly enough conceded by the Legislature, and were found by general agreement to improve the mechanism of the constitution. But as a protest it succeeded. It drew attention to the needs and wishes of large classes long overlooked by our lawgivers. Indirectly it brought about greater sympathy between all sections of our society. It helped to bridge the gulf dividing the rich from the poor, the idle from the industrious; it diffused knowledge; it roused interest; it helped on the general progress of the English people. That is my view of the matter.

It was a sunny evening in spring; with transparent rain clouds veiling the horizon, with outbreaks of pale golden light, and curious patches of purple shadow chequering the landscape.

I encountered Mr. Grisdale upon Hampstead-heath. He looked sad and careworn, but he was perfectly calm.

"I am up here for fresh air and a little peace and rest, and for time to think. I am going on to The Spaniards for a cup of tea and a watercress. The fact is, my dear boy, I dare not go home. I am charged with sedition. A warrant has been issued for my apprehension. Cuffey and Jones, Fussell and Looney, are already in custody. If I venture back to Somers-town I am certain to be arrested."

"Where is Catalina?" I demanded.

"Poor child, she's safe enough. She's with Uncle Junius. They can't do anything to him, you know. It's quite true that he played the French horn in one of the bands on Kennington-common; but that isn't a criminal offence—as yet. Now if any good purpose could be served by

my arrest, I would cheerfully submit to the action of the authorities. But to imprison me will benefit no one, and will injure me considerably. I intend therefore, in point of fact, to keep out of the way."

"And Catalina?" I repeated.

"My dear boy, you forget they can bring no possible charge against her. It's true she's helped me with my newspaper; but they don't know that. Catalina's safe enough. There's Junius to look after her, and, of course, you'd lend a helping hand if need arose."

"Of course," I said earnestly.

A policeman passed us. "Perhaps it would be a few pounds in that poor fellow's pocket if he knew me to be Grisdale the Chartist!"

CHAPTER XII. POSTSCRIPTUM.

IT is very hot; and Mr. Grisdale, attired in a suit of white duck, is glad to move his rocking-chair well beneath the shadow of his verandah. There is a cup of tea close beside him, and he holds in his hand a copy of *The Australasian Sentinel*, of which organ he is the editor and sole proprietor. Melbourne is within an easy ride or drive of his villa.

Some years have passed. But his age, like old Adam's, is "as a lusty winter, frosty but kindly." Time has somewhat thinned his rampant locks, dimming their ardour of hue; it is as though the flames had burnt out, and left but gray ashes. Otherwise he looks hearty and healthy; altogether in excellent preservation.

"Australia has been the making of me," he is wont frankly to own; and he adds ambitiously: "I should like to be the making of Australia. But we shall do very well. We need have no fear. Australia advances! Melbourne grows to be a great city. To be sure, the buildings are a little mixed; but they'll shake into their places, both shanty and palace, in a very little while. Ah! Basil, if your poor father were but alive, and with us still! He'd find rare scope for his genius as an architect here. There's room enough and to spare in these parts for any number of glorious edifices. Melbourne's chief want is an architect."

The *Australasian Sentinel* was an energetic journal, warmly advocating the interest of the squatters—what was known indeed throughout the colony as the Conservative cause.

"We must always remember," observes Mr. Grisdale, "that we are at the anti-

podes, and that things here are apt to wear rather a topsy-turvy appearance. It's Christmas time, yet the weather's so hot that a steaming plum-pudding is almost a personal offence to me. Similarly I am the editor of what's called a Conservative paper, the while I'm in opposition to the Government and supporting the interest of the original settlers upon the soil. I should call myself a Radical if I wasn't in Australia; and though I am practically a free-trader, I am steadily and honestly recommending a mild course of protection as very necessary for a young colony, which must learn to walk before it can learn to run, and while it's learning to walk needs must have kindly hands stretched out to it to prevent its tumbling down altogether."

The *Sentinel* is no time-serving journal, however. It speaks with most fault-finding candour of His Excellency; it deals in slashing leaders and pointed paragraphs upon a variety of topics. In truth it is very much one of Mr. Grisdale's old Somers-town organs attired in colonial raiment. Even certain of the old Utopias find "ventilation" in the columns of The *Sentinel*. Here is a familiar panegyric concerning the suffrage and the elective principle, with a rather wild proposition that the constables of the colony, having, after a fashion, to rule over men, shall be appointed to office by the vote of their fellow-citizens, the inevitable ballot-box being, of course, forthcoming on the occasion. And here is a suggestion for the foundation of a universal bank, the capital to be supplied by philanthropists, which shall lend money free of interest and so somehow indirectly abolish taxes, and in time pay off the national debt. But these eccentricities notwithstanding, The *Sentinel* is a sensible and business-like paper, enjoying a large circulation, and very well supported by advertisers. And apparently Mr. Grisdale has made his peace with the pillars of the Church. There, at any rate, is an article very complimentary to the Bishop of Melbourne, with whom, indeed, Mr. Grisdale had the pleasure of dining only last week. Moreover, there are evidences of regard for certain political institutions of ancient date, such as the Somers-town publications viewed rather intolerantly. Looking at it now from a long distance, Mr. Grisdale finds something to admire even in the British Constitution, and is capable at intervals of civil mention of the Crown.

To be sure "the mother country" is sometimes rather derisively spoken of; but there is love in the laughter; a prankish boy might in the same way jest at the old lady his mother, her foibles and eccentricities, the while his heart really feels very tenderly towards her.

"When we were championing the People's Charter with its six points, we might have added a seventh—the most important of all—emigration! What a good thing it would be if we could transplant——"

"Transport?"

"I said 'transplant,' sir—certain of our old friends. They'd flourish in this fine generous soil, whereas at home—in England I should say, I count this my home now—they are overcrowded, they are perishing for lack of fresh free air and room to move. Emigration's the thing. The English population will thrive the better for being thinned; the more that come here the better it will be for all."

"Especially for The Australasian Sentinel."

"A most admirable advertising medium. But depend upon it, I am right. Sow Englishmen in various parts of the globe, and reap grand colonial possessions; in time new empires come into existence, and the world acquires a richer history, a grander interest."

Uncle Junius approaches. He calls himself Professor of Music now. A large door-plate in Melbourne's chief street informs the world of the fact. He looks old, and is a good deal bent, but he has prospered altogether.

"The mail's in," he says.

"What's the news?"

"Well, there's nothing much that I call news. Do you remember a man named Hooton, Lucius?"

"Hooton? Toomer Hooton? To be sure I do. I met him"—he was going to say "in The Bench," he substituted "years ago."

"I thought I knew the name," says Junius, hazily. "He calls himself an eminent tragedian—he's arrived with a company of actors. He intends to give a series of Shakespearian performances throughout the colony."

"What crimes are committed in the name of Shakespeare!" exclaims Mr. Grisdale. "But I suppose this Hooton must be supported. He must be getting on—in years. It would be hard his coming all this way to be hissed, because I don't doubt he often got hissed, and very well hissed,

in England. We'll welcome him. We'll even take tickets for his benefit, and——"

"And not go to it," says a thrilling musical voice.

Doris is the speaker. She is very beautiful still, and a calm smile graces her lips, and there is a sort of tender flush of colour upon her cheeks. She looks as one who has gone through sore tribulation, to find peace at last. The ordeal has been undergone, but it is not forgotten—the memory of it, indeed, cannot pass away—its impression is indelible. "A curious air of thoughtfulness now seems to possess her face, her manner is marked by a sort of musing repose; her eyes one might fancy are oftentimes fixed upon the past, and occupied with visions not manifest to others. And yet she seems able now and then to put her troubles far from her; but that is chiefly when she looks at little Paul beside her, and busies herself in tending him, in finding new pleasures for him, in sharing his childish pursuits and pastimes.

Mr. Grisdale rises from his chair, and would yield it to Doris. But little Paul will have her come with him beneath the shelter of the umbrella, to gather certain favourite English flowers, with which the garden is ablaze.

"How like the child grows to his father!" notes Mr. Grisdale. "The same fine cast of features, the same grave, gray eyes, with the same crisp cap of curls—but they boast the ruddy gold gleam of his mother's locks. If our friend Leveridge were still alive and with us, what studies he might make of Cupid, of the Infant Bacchus, of Ganymede, and the rest of them. How the poetry of the old paganism has kept it alive! Is not that a pretty picture now?"

It was a very pretty picture. Doris and her boy nestling under the umbrella, and gaining increase of shadow from a wide-spreading canopy of foliage, seated upon the slope of the sward, toying with the flowers they had gathered, and interchanging the pretty prattle, the sweet smiles, the tender glances, and fond caresses, that have constituted, since the time of the first-born, the unvarying converse of mother and child—exquisitely delightful to both.

Presently arrives a letter from Nick.

We had heard from him only intermittently. Letter-writing was distasteful to him; he had been ill-pleased at our departure from England; and had ex-

pressed himself very contemptuously in regard to the colonies. He was apt to confuse the emigrant with the convict, and entertained a vague notion that Botany Bay was the proper title of the whole continent of New South Wales.

He was a married man at last! Emmy Baker had become his wife.

We learnt the news with some surprise. We had supposed him pledged to Eliza Baker.

It appeared that certain hitches had interrupted the progress of his wooing. After his usual manner, he had conceived that his wishes were to be wholly unopposed, and that what he had planned to take place would assuredly occur. He had thus announced to us his intention to marry Eliza Baker, before he had taken much counsel with the young lady upon the subject, or been at any trouble to secure her consent. To his great amazement she had refused him, when at last he made his formal offer. She had informed him, however, that, unwilling herself to become his wife, she nevertheless thought it very possible that her elder sister Alice might like the situation. To Alice, therefore, after a certain pause, to compose his nerves and regain his breath, Nick accordingly applied himself. But Alice in her turn rejected his suit. Still she went on to say, by way, perhaps, of breaking his fall, that she rather fancied her sister Emmy, after formal application, might consent to become his wife.

What Nick thought of this, cannot be fully stated. However, he addressed himself to Emmy; and, in due course, he obtained from her a favourable response. Emmy was the eldest of the three sisters, and it had been arranged beforehand, perhaps, that she should be the first to be married. Or it may be, that she thought it well that Nick should not go altogether out of the family; and therefore, upon her sister's rejection of him, she accepted him.

Old Baker died, and the existence of his bank was seriously menaced by the appearance at the East-end of London of various branches of the Joint Stock Banking Companies. In time it became necessary to amalgamate the old institution with the new. Nick appeared subsequently as the head-cashier of the eastern branch of the Cosmopolitan Banking and Universal Discount Company (Limited). It does not seem likely that he will ever rise much above that position; but it is one of comfort and considerable emolument.

Emmy's share in the estate of her late father has been securely settled upon herself. But they promise to be a very happy and united couple.

Yet another figure joins the group in the garden of Mr. Grisdale's Australian villa.

My Catalina brings her grandfather yet another cup of tea. I say "my Catalina," with intention, of set purpose, and with truth. For she is indeed mine.

I may not tell fully how it all came about. I feel that already I am verily guilty, in that I have trespassed so much upon the reader's attention. But—I loved Catalina. The fact has been set forth, I think, more than once in these records.

The emigrant ship was off Blackwall. Catalina stood beside Uncle Junius upon the deck; all thought of prosecuting Mr. Grisdale had been abandoned. He had gone on to Melbourne to establish a home there for his brother, and for his darling Catalina.

"It is very hard to say good-bye."

My heart was so full, I could only venture upon commonplaces.

"Is parting such sweet sorrow, as the poet says? I think, in truth, it's very bitter sorrow."

"And we part for so long a time, for ever it may be."

"No—not for ever. Don't say that—don't even think that. We shall meet again—and soon. I feel certain that we shall."

"Catalina," I said wildly, "I love you so! If you bid me come to you, however far away you may be, I shall surely be beside you, at your feet—very, very speedily."

"I will say it now. 'Come to me,' or 'come with us,'" she said laughingly, but with tears in her eyes, and a throb in her voice.

"But—have you thought? Do you know what that signifies? It means that you love me, that you are mine, always mine—my wife."

"I love you! Do you want it said so plainly, in so many words?" she hid her blushing face.

"How was I to know it, if you would not say it plainly in so many words?"

"How was I to say it, sir, if you would not ask me to say it? Is a girl to be like a ripe plum, and to drop into your mouth of her own accord or in spite of herself, if you but stand long enough below mute and agape? But, in truth, I don't think I

knew myself how much I loved you, Basil, until this hour of our parting came, and then—— It's hard to read one's own heart, or to know what's written there; and sometimes, you see, one doesn't want to know, one hurries past the page, though the inscription on it may be in very large and plain letters. But the time for reading it surely comes. In truth, the writing is forced upon one's attention at last, it thrills through one, and sets one's cheeks burning, as mine are now, and then others can read it beside one oneself. You for instance."

"Love is so blind!"

"Lovers are so stupid!"

CLIPPED RUPEES.

THE only club in London not now devoid of tenants is the Cardamom—a club famous for its curries and pillaus, its mangoes and chutney. Thither go many "old Indians," not of the conventional "nabob" type, but wholesome-looking gentlemen, plump if not rosy, perhaps a little over-dignified and ceremonious—the invariable fault of people who have lived anywhere as a caste—but good fellows in the main; far better read than London people who, if, as the slang phrase goes, really "in it," know everything about politics and society at first hand, and professing to care for nothing else, read nothing but the newspapers and perhaps a magazine or two. They profess—these people who are "in it"—to admire, if they have heard of him, Charles Lamb's friend who left off reading "to the great increase of his originality," and Vanbrugh's Lord Foppington, from whom Lamb took his idea; and they have all heard of Sarah Jennings and her books, "men and cards," for was not she the ancestress of the noble houses of Spencer and Spencer-Churchill, not to know all about whom would be to confess ignorance of Burke and all his works? But the "Indians" read steadily, while in India; recollect what they read; and actually embellish their talk with anecdotes and references to persons dead and gone a quarter of a century ago. I sometimes believe, as I sit in the smoking-room of the Cardamom, that these excellent people believe in the survival of conversation—an art, that their friends at home gave up in the dark ages before Apollinaris water was invented. They finish their sentences, too, these grandees, as if

reporters were in waiting to take them down, and they give them a rhetorical twist, as if making a "gallery stroke." Mr. Tattenham says their neatly-worded sentences are "long-winded," and consigns them to Tophet for a "prosy lot, who round off their speeches as if they were writing an official report." As for me, I like the old gentlemen passing well, and infinitely prefer them to the young Indians, who have grievances. The old ones have grievances too, but they, if lengthy in narrating them, do not repeat themselves, as the younger men do. In one respect—although there is no comparison they would more energetically repudiate—the latter resemble the Chartists of a bygone generation. Frost and Feargus O'Connor and their followers had a happy knack of saving the costs, charges, and expenses of a room or hall for their meetings. Funds were scarce, for one thing, and their mode of procedure had an additional attraction in its free and buccaneering character. It was known as the "cuckoo dodge," and was played in this way. No sooner did the Anti-Corn Law agitators, or any other body of persons, organise a meeting, than the Chartists mustered in force, and taking violent possession of the platform then and there, converted the Anti-Something-or-other meeting into a Chartist demonstration. This is precisely what the young malcontents do at the Cardamom Club. They put an end to rational talk. Only the other day I was discussing with Sir Hercules Brinjal the merits of Madame Grand, afterwards Madame Talleyrand, when Sir Hercules unluckily insisted on telling his favourite anecdote about "sicca" rupees—the good ancient rupee which preceded the present debased currency. At some length the worthy man descanted on the difference between a "sicca" and an ordinary rupee in the time of Sir Philip Francis, and on the debate between the judges in the divorce case of Grand against Francis as to the amount of damages to be awarded. Judge Hyde desired to fix the damages at a lakh of rupees, while Judge Chambers thought no damages should be given at all; but finding himself alone against Impey and Hyde, named thirty-three thousand rupees. The president—Impey—cut the knot very easily, and gave judgment for fifty thousand rupees. Hereat Judge Hyde sprang up in his seat and cried out, "Siccas, brother Impey, siccas!" and the court gave judgment accordingly.

Hardly are the words out of Sir Hercules Brinjal's mouth than there is a bubble of talk about rupees, siccas and others; and such talk of exchanges that one would imagine himself in Cornhill.

"I tell you," says Captain Kedgerée, a smart, soldierly man of some eight-and-thirty summers, "that it is not the sum in question, but the gross injustice of the thing, that raises one's bile. To me it makes a difference of forty pounds a year—gloves and cheroots to some of you single fellows, but an important item to a married man. The entire principle is false. We are Englishmen, and engaged in the service of the Queen of England and Empress of India. I, for one, don't know what we have to do with rupees at all, and why, like other conquering nations, we have not forced our currency, and for many purposes our language too, on a conquered country, instead of adopting their rubbishing rupees and mohurs, lakhs and crores. But granting that custom has made it convenient to pay us, while in India, in the money of the country, it is absurd to saddle us when on furlough with a difference of exchange: it is striking a soldier in his tenderest part. Hard knocks and hard weather he can stand well enough, but touch his pay and allowances and you shall see what you shall see."

"Eh! but ye're sound in that part of your proposition," chimes in old Sandy McSpeldring. "What was the secret of the success of their High Mightinesses the States of Holland? What was it that helped them to thrash first the Spaniards and then the French, till the big countries were glad to cry peccavimus? Will ye answer me that? Ye'll find it explained by Sir Walter—an author none of the degenerate creatures of to-day ever read. Through the mouth of Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket he tells us that the States of Holland were hard taskmasters, but that their 'behaviour on pay-day was an example' to Europe. They just got the best fighting material because they paid the best price for it, and paid it punctually."

"Having incidentally informed the company of the greatness of Sir Walter Scott," resumed Kedgerée, "perhaps you will allow me to point out the particular grievance I protest against."

"Go on, man. The sound of his ain voice is dear to the humblest of Heaven's creatures."

"Well then. Passing over the broad absurdity of paying English officers serving the Queen in her Indian army in rupees—less exchange when home on furlough—I will point out the peculiar hardship for which we have to thank that meddling genius the Duke of Argyll, and propose a motto for him, 'Nihil tetigit, quod non damnavit.'"

"Let McCallum More alone," out in McSpeldring; "the father-in-law of a princess of the royal blood wants no mottoes of your making."

"Don't interrupt, old 'Nemo me impune,' &c. It is the Duke of Argyll's interference which has brought about the present abominable state of things. Prior to 1868, officers of the Indian armies going to England on furlough, drew pay at English rates, that is, at the rates of pay drawn by officers of corresponding rank in the British army. But in 1868, the conditions of service in India having been materially changed by the Staff Corps Organisation, and the cost of living having enormously increased, the Indian Government introduced a new code of furlough rules; the leading feature of which was, that furlough pay was fixed at fifty per cent. of the pay and allowances drawn in India, and that this fifty per cent. should be drawn in England at the rate of two shillings per rupee."

"Admirably stated," murmurs Sir Hercules, "but our friend promises to be lengthy. (To the waiter) A lemon squash."

"Sorry to see a man with a fine natural taste for everything wrong, reduced to the subacid innocence of a squash, but I will resume. So far as I have gone, the position was perfectly clear and intelligible. Furlough pay meant half-pay and half allowances at two shillings per rupee—but this was too simple to last long. In 1871, the Duke of Argyll—then, unhappily, Secretary for India—suddenly discovered that officers on furlough were drawing their furlough pay at two shillings per rupee, when the rate of exchange was only about one shilling and tenpence half-penny, and in a despatch to the Government of India, directed that furlough pay should be reckoned at the current rate of silver; thus making the rate of pay to depend upon the market price of that metal. There, Mr. McSpeldring, is the text of the despatch. Read aloud the wisdom of McCallum More."

McSpeldring, who is only one member of an entire clan in the Indian service,

forgets the claims of country in those of kin, and reads, in a voice like the creaking of cart-wheels, the following:

"DESPATCH.

"India Office, London. April 27, 1871.

"Par. 5.—In the General Order issued by the Government of India, number one thousand and sixty-four, dated November 10, 1868, it was stated that furlough pay in all future orders and references would be understood as the half Indian salary within the prescribed limits, converted at the exchange of two shillings for the rupee.

"Par. 6.—On a careful consideration of the matter, it appears to me that there is no reason why the pay of officers in the country should be issued at a different rate from that at which those in India are allowed to remit a portion of their salary to England.

"Par. 7.—I have accordingly to request that your lordship will at once issue an order cancelling so much of that of November 10, 1868, number one thousand and sixty-four, as fixed the uniform rate of two shillings, and announcing that all payments of furlough pay will be made at the current rate of exchange fixed for the official year."

"Very ingenious, indeed," insinuates Sir Hercules, with secret delight at the blunder of a Radical; "because they lost money in remitting home, they must lose money when they come home. Excellently reasoned. Quite worthy of the little schoolmaster with a theological bee in his bonnet."

"Let me go on. This was not all. Previous to the issue of the order of 1871, made by the direction of the Duke of Argyll, there was a period of uncertainty, during which officers were allowed to 'elect' between the old and new rules—the English rate, or fifty per cent. of Indian pay and allowances at two shillings per rupee. It is important to recollect that only those officers who took furlough between 1868 and 1871 had a chance of this 'election.' Every officer who availed himself of it is absolutely bound by his contract while in the service. Its chief condition was, that he should be paid, in the words of the fourth paragraph of the rules, 'the half Indian salary within the prescribed limits, converted at the exchange of two shillings for the rupee.' These were called the 1868 Rules."

Here I cannot help breaking in with:

"I don't quite follow you. The thing is getting mixed between the 1868 rules and the doctrine of election, and the 1871 something. Give me a cheroot, for reason rocks upon its throne."

"I have remarked," throws in Sir Hercules, "that although English people come forward handsomely with subscriptions for the Indian famine, they will never take the pains to understand any Indian question. An Indian debate clears the House at once. When a quarter of a million of people were overwhelmed by a tidal wave in Bengal, there was less notice taken of it in England, than there would have been of the loss of a ship with fifty passengers off the Lizard."

I submit that the death of remote persons affects me so little, that the old murder test about slaying a mandarin in China by an act of volition in England, seems to me weak and unfair—not to say silly.

"Well," continues the chief orator, "the position is this, that officers who required furlough between 1868 and 1871, and 'elected' the new rules, enjoy special advantages over those who took no leave at that period. There has been a five years' fight over the question, and the decision leaves everything more chaotic than ever. An attempt was made to extend the 1871 order to officers who had 'elected,' but this was fought by Colonel Boisragon, who pleaded his contract, asserting that as he was irrevocably bound by the conditions under which he had elected the Furlough Regulations of 1868, so was the Government as the other party to the contract, and that it was not competent to the Government to evade the performance of a specific contract. The Marquis of Salisbury admitted the justice of the plea, Colonel Boisragon won his case, and, as the matter stands, officers who went home under the 1868 regulations, before July, 1871, are to be paid at the rate of two shillings the rupee, while those who took furlough under the same rules, but after that date, are to be paid at the current rate of exchange fixed by the Secretary of State. Thus only those officers who were fortunate enough to be able to take furlough between July, 1868, and July, 1871, reap the advantage of this decision. How unfairly this decision operates may be shown by one or two instances. Captain Jones is a man of weak constitution, and unable to stan the climate for long together. He has

therefore, been frequently obliged to go to England to recruit his health, and being fairly well off, and having something besides his pay to live upon, he has been able to afford thus frequent trips; out of fifteen or sixteen years' service, quite half has been spent on furlough. In 1870, he went home under the New Code, drawing his pay at par. In 1877, he again goes home, and, thanks to Colonel Boisragon, again gets his pay at par. Captain Smith, on the other hand, is a strong, healthy man, able to stand the climate, and to do his duty. This, and the misfortune of want of means, have combined to keep him in India. He has not been able to take furlough, nor has his health necessitated his being sent home on sick furlough. But in 1877, after some seventeen years' continuous service, he finds himself at last able to afford a trip to England, and arranges to go with Jones. But poor Smith, although, in India, equal to Jones in point of pay, in England finds himself worse off than his comrade, to the extent of some forty pounds a year. Surely an unfair position for the man who has done the work."

"It is hardly fair to throw the blame of what appears to be a half-measure on Lord Salisbury," sums up Sir Hercules Brinjal. "He did what was asked of him by Colonel Boisragon, in whose case law and justice were clear enough. Colonel Boisragon very properly confined himself to his own contract, and gained his cause. Justice to the officers who were not fortunate enough to have the opportunity of election, can only be done by rescinding the Duke of Argyll's troublesome order altogether."

And the prayer of the Cardamom Club is not "God bless the Duke of Argyll."

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCESILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I. GOING HOME.

It had been with a not altogether light heart that, when the time came, Celia had to leave Lindenheim. She had been there three whole years, and had never so much as dreamed of going home. From year's end to year's end she had lived at the apothecary's at the sign of The Golden Lion, in a round of hard work and quiet

pleasure, till it was Deepweald, and not Lindenheim, that became the dream.

It never struck her as strange that her father never sent for her to see him. His ways had always been so different from what she now learned were the ways of other men, that it would have struck her as very strange indeed, if he had done in anything what any other man would have done. She drew no comparisons; and, as almost everyone of her fellow-students stood upon some abnormal relation to his or her own family, domestic eccentricities were the order of the day.

He had written to her now and again, though without any regularity; but, after her first vain and barren attempt to write to him, he exacted from her the most minute weekly record of how she employed every moment of her time, and not only of her studies. She had begun faithfully. But presently—and without the least intention or thought of suppression—certain little incidents began to drop out of her diary. There had always been a secret undertone of sympathy between this ill-matched father and daughter, but never confidence; and confidence does not spring up as quickly, or even as surely, as one of Lord Quorne's cucumbers—or certain other gourds. He had taught her to be shy, and set up a barrier of reticence between even her own right and left hands. How could she possibly write to John March catalogues of the land-parties to Waaren and elsewhere, of the chatter of a parcel of boys and girls, of the thousand and one little interests into which she fell, but that would want a far more practised and more fluent pen than hers to make even intelligible? It would be like offering a handful of daisies to a lion—or a bear. And so it came to pass, that the name of Walter Gordon was among the trifles that dropped out of her diary. And the chatter of her friend Lotte was another—and, in short, everything that makes up life, to which work hardly ever belongs. Let the hardest student think, and—unless he be another John March—realise how little time and thought his work takes up, compared with the merest everyday trifles.

So Celia had duly chronicled her singing of Infelice at a students' concert, only omitting, out of shyness, the praise and the envy that it gained her; but she had never mentioned the receipt of a bunch of violets, though it had interested her ten thousand times more. Nor—for how on earth could she explain what she did not

understand?—her plighted friendship with Walter Gordon. It seemed so natural, and yet so strange; so easy, and yet so unaccountable.

It was at least two months after her troth-plight to an eternal flirtation, after the sense, or nonsense, of Lindenheim, that Lotte said to her in her little room at The Golden Lion:

"It is time you should tell me something about your emotions, Celia."

Celia understood German very fairly by this time, but the question puzzled her a little.

"My emotions?"

"Of course. I want to compare them with mine. Do you know, Celia, I'm not altogether satisfied with my own. If I like yours better, we'll change emotions for a little while."

"By all means," said Celia. "I should like some emotions very much indeed. Are they really so pleasant?"

"Now, that is Herr Walter all over! As if you didn't know very well. Really, my dear child, there is something very extraordinary about you. You have been months at Lindenheim, and you have not only been constant yourself, but the cause of constancy in—Herr Walter. Do you know what I should say if we weren't in Lindenheim?"

"What?"

"Why, that Herr Walter is downright in love with you—over head and ears—the real thing. Only, of course, that's impossible."

Celia flushed rose-pink, as girls do who have heard of Love but never seen him.

"There!" cried Lotte, clapping her hands together. "If that isn't just charming! Oh, if I could only have an emotion again that would come like that, it would save me in rouge for ever so long. But, you see, I've had so many. Do, please, tell me how you feel."

"Very well, thank you," said Celia.

"Oh, you English! You haven't got an impulse in you—not a sentiment even. I used to love, oh, passionately, when I first came to Lindenheim. I never could hear the name of Walter without turning as red as a boiled lobster and feeling my heart beat till I was afraid for my stays. Of course I'm desperately in love with him still, only it's more sentimental; but it does enrage me to see anybody else taking first love as quietly as one's first music lesson. But it can't be—isn't your heart beating—wildly? No," she said

sadly, after placing her hand over the muscle where poets have chosen to locate the passions. "No; it is absolutely calm. I'm disappointed in you, Celia. I thought it would be so nice to have a rival I liked, instead of that odious Ilma. It would have been so delightful for us to be jealous of one another together, and agree upon what we were to feel. Do tell me what you think of Herr Walter, Celia."

"I like him very much indeed. He is very kind to me, and I am very grateful. You and he are my two friends."

"Celia, you are a downright goose out of heaven. It's your feathers that Dame Holle shakes down at Christmas. It's my belief that you're a great deal fonder of Herr Walter than I am—there! I know what's English for kindness and gratitude. It is 'loaf,' my dear child."

She sighed sentimentally, and then laughed, like a wise woman of the world—of Lindenheim—at nineteen.

Nevertheless, Herr Walter was very kind, and Celia was very grateful. He had opened the windows of her life, and let in the sun; how much they needed opening he might guess, but could not know. He gave something more than mere human interest to her days, and kept his word in the matter of constancy. And the least touch of sympathetic human interest was a revelation to a girl, who had been taught to look upon the whole round world as but a pendant to a church organ, and as a dead body to be inspired by an as yet unwritten score for voices and full orchestra.

He gave her a great deal to wonder at and to remember, besides that talk on the way to Waaren and that other talk on her way from her first lesson. Very few days passed without his bringing life into her round, and so putting heart into her work and her waking. He cultivated an acquaintance with the apothecary's family at The Golden Lion, and very often spent an hour or so there before joining the good company that met later on at The Stadt Dresden. He broke up the Quakers'-meeting character of the school concerts, by sitting by Celia and her chaperon. He gave her flowers and chocolate. It was all according to the strict code of Lindenheim etiquette, save in the matter of constancy; and there was nothing about it all that would be called lover-like anywhere.

No doubt Herr Walter liked the relation, or it may be assumed that it would not have continued. She could feel and

understand the kindness of heart that first drew the leader of Lindenheim society to throw the shelter of his friendship over the shy and friendless new girl. It was not his fault that the first rose of May in her heart should be made to bud under his sunshine. However little the sun may think of the rose, the rose must needs think a great deal of the sun. That infinitely delicate thing without a name, that is in no sense love but might be love, that feels itself without thinking, that enjoys itself without knowing—that perfume without blossom, music without notes, that is nowhere possible, save in some days of spring and some hearts of girls—had already come to her; and how was he to know? And yet he must have felt the fragrance of it a little, or he would never have become so intimate with the apothecary at The Golden Lion.

But he had left Lindenheim with a promise to write, and had kept his promise to the extent of two long and three short letters. That was a great deal for a man who had left Lindenheim for Rome. The “Good-bye” was perfectly simple—it was only tacitly understood that their student-friendship was to last for ever. The matter-of-fact Celia believed it; she would have believed it no more fully had the understanding been sworn to. She had no theories about friendship, and assumed that “once” in all cases means once for all.

Of course she missed Herr Walter. Nay, she was so eccentric, for a Lindenheim student, as to remember him. But it was not as we miss what we lose. He had left her a legacy. And this was an infinite faith in the sunshine. Her heart crept a little back into itself, in its mouse-like way, but she had her work left, and an assurance that there was silent sympathy with her somewhere in the world.

And then Lotte left Lindenheim. And then, at last, it drew near to her own time for leaving. She had written to her father to tell him of the approaching end of her course and asking what she was to do. For all answer she had received these few lines:

“Dear Celia. Don’t wait. Don’t take your diploma. You must not be labelled. Arrange to return instantly. I shall expect you daily. J. M.”

No eccentricity from home surprised her, even though in the present instance it obliged her to travel alone from Lindenheim to Deepweald. That was not a

matter likely to trouble a man who never had more than one paramount idea, and to whom details—save in his score—were nothing and nowhere. But the sudden summons told her that it was not an easy thing to leave Lindenheim, even to go home.

What a strange experience is always that same “going home!”

After even a short absence, when many things have happened, it is a mixture of desires and presentiments not always of the most comfortable kind. When we are fairly away from it, home is just as mere a shadow as strange countries are when we are at home. For three whole years, from girlhood to well-nigh womanhood, Lindenheim had been home to Celia. It contained all her real interests, however guilty she might feel in owning such a thing. She had not seen her father. She could picture him well enough, at will, drawing thunder from the organ or toiling at that never-ending score; but he had become almost like a dream of childhood, and not of a kind that people like to dream over again. The grim, grotesque incarnation of gnome-like labour, living apart from his kind in the gloom of a house that must surely be haunted and saturated with ghosts of half-born harmonies, fell like frost over the Saxon Arcadia, with its free, frank life, its youth, its hopes, its sympathies, and its sunshine. She could have remained there contentedly, she thought, all her life long; going home was like leaving home. And then there were more things to leave behind in Lindenheim than were actually there. That lilac-dream was bound up with Lindenheim; it seemed to refuse transplantation to Deepweald. Going home was like going back to childhood—and slavery.

But, after she once found herself in the English railway train, came the desires and the presentiments in force; Lindenheim was falling back for awhile into dreamland. What change would she find? She was not the same Celia. She found herself contemplating her old self as from an outer point of view; and, if she even to herself had changed so much, what would remain unchanged? Could her three years of transformation have passed over her father without a sign? She had the illusion of Lindenheim on her that she had grown old there; so what must her father be? The old names and associa-

tions grew up before her oddly. While she had been turning into a woman, as she thought, was Mr. Gaveston still reading the same poems, to the same fifteen representatives of St. Dorcas? was Mr. Swann still cracking the same jokes? was Mrs. Swann still snoring the self-same snore? It was hardly possible; even Deepweald must surely have been spinning round in some way all this while. And, if not, she would be coming home among them all as a stranger, bringing with her unknown experiences, no more intelligible at Deepweald than the Laureate's poetry had been three years ago. After all, it would be less strange to meet Herr Walter in the flesh in front of the Shire Hall, than to see the cathedral tower where it had always been.

And yet, there it did stand. She had never thought of noticing it before; but now the sight of it made her nerves thrill and her heart beat, as it had not beaten under Fräulein Lotte's experiment. She came back one autumn afternoon. Nobody had met her—no doubt her father was adding a semiquaver to his score. It looked very gray, a little grayer and older it seemed to her, against the pale blue of the sky. The elms were turning brown, and there was the quiet keenness in the air, that comes before the leaves fall. The rooks were coming home early. How unspeakably, strangely familiar it all was, and at the same time how unspeakably strange! The very gravel of The Close looked oddly; and there was her house of bondage—

Flutteringly, almost timidly, she got out of her fly and knocked at the door. Not so timid had she felt at her own father's threshold when she had disobeyed him for the first time by hearing Mademoiselle Clari sing. She felt terribly alone, and missed Herr Walter here, where he could not be, even more than at Lindenheim.

The door was opened by a slovenly girl, who stared at her and her luggage.

"Where is my father?"

"Eh, ma'am?"

"I am Miss March," Celia had to explain. "Where is my father? Is he at the cathedral?"

"No, ma'am—miss. He'll be in the study. He don't go to church now."

"Is he well?"

"He's much like as mostly. You'll find him in there."

She left her luggage to take care of itself, and opened the study door. The

room had changed as little as the cathedral, except that the old litter had grown into tenfold confusion, and that its stale cloudiness seemed to speak of the pipe and the score, not indulged in at odd moments but at least four-and-twenty hours a day, or more if they could anywise be squeezed in. And what did the girl mean by saying, "He don't go to church now?" Even as Celia entered she heard the chanting of afternoon service through the closed windows.

There he still sat at his battered escritoire, the dwarfish, broad-shouldered figure of the organist, as if he had never stirred from it for three years. He must have been absorbed in his score indeed, for neither her knock, nor the crunching of the fly-wheels on the rough gravel, nor her entrance into the room disturbed him. In the far old times she would not have dared breathe disturbance when he was so deeply occupied. The force of revived habit came upon her, and she stood waiting—hardly knowing whether she yearned to throw her arms round him, or whether to creep quietly upstairs and cry.

The scratching of the pen still continued. She could bear it no longer, and at last, without moving towards him, said, in scarcely above a whisper:

"I am come home."

She had learned to write the word "father," but she could not speak it for the first time.

"I am come home," she said a little more boldly. But the scratching still went on.

Presently it stopped. "I am come home," she said a third time, so that he must hear. But he did not turn round.

An awe fell upon her. She had been away so long, and there was a weird feeling about the dim room, and the silent, motionless figure, and for an audible background, the dull chant outside.

"Father!" she cried out for the first time since she was born. But she could not have moved a step towards him for the world.

The pen went on again. Another chord was added to the score.

Something terrible was growing out of this petrification of time. Had he really sat there so long as to have become but an incarnate score? She knew not after how long, but at last he rose and turned round.

"Celia!"

Her own name in that voice like a deep organ stop opened all the gates of the old

life, and woke up the room. As little as she could have moved towards him before, could she keep herself now from flying to him—for the first time. But he held out both his hands.

"Wait—are you in time? Don't speak. Sing."

Celia was used to eccentricities too well, and had grown to gather too much systematic meaning in them, to imagine that during her absence her father's brain had been affected by solitude and the score. She could well enough comprehend, knowing him, his anxiety as to the result of Lindenheim, and his impatience to be satisfied. She looked for no signs of affection. But this welcome home was a little too cruel. She had found at least one thing in Lindenheim—a human soul; and it was too young and unflinched to be callous to wounding.

"Sing, Celia," he said again.

Her arrival home in the autumn afternoon, her first sight of the gray tower after three years, her falling back into the old air, the lilac buds she had brought with her from Lindenheim, had already filled her heart to overflowing. It seemed swelling and choking her. Instinctively she thought of Walter, who now seemed to personify all sympathy. Sing! She could not speak even. She could not even cry till she could escape into solitude.

"You are not singing," said her father.

What was she to do? Obedience was the first law of her nature. It came on her with double force because of her freedom. She could not sing; but she made a painful effort, and managed to sob out the first few notes of Infelice. It was the first music that came to her.

He kept his eyes fixed on her. Did they give her strength, or did they only compel her weakness to seem like strength, against her will? There was no absurdity in the situation to him or to her. Mechanically she drew her breath harder to keep down the choking sobs, and the ball rising in her throat, and forced herself to bring out the bare notes with the more power for the effort that it cost her. He still watched her lips, her throat, her eyes. Anyone suddenly entering, would have thought it a piece of mesmerism or wizardcraft, to see the organist, redeemed from

grotesqueness by a power that forbade any man ever to smile at him, forcing an unwilling voice from the girl before him.

He did not release her till she had gone through the whole scena from beginning to end.

"I see you sing well," he said abruptly. "I think—I think I could have heard you seven days ago. Well, I waited too long."

"Good Heaven, father, what do you mean?"

"The score is nearly finished. It won't take more than a few years more, now. By that time you will be in your prime." He was speaking very calmly, in his deep voice; but there was a harsh tone in it, new to her, as if the organ stops were growing out-worn—a sort of dull despair in it, far more moving than any outburst of passion would have been. There was affectation of stoicism even, harder to bear than the agonised tone in which, three years ago, he had made a long-forgotten prediction of the doom that was upon him; for she remembered that now, and understood all.

He had been giving up life, and all that—as she had come to know—life means, for the achievement of a perfect work and a perfect voice, that he who made them would never hear. A dumb orator, a blind painter, a deaf musician—which is the more terrible doom?

Celia could only cry out, and, at last, with a full heart, fall upon his neck—his real child at last come home. Lindenheim faded into mist, and was forgotten; here alone was reality. She broke into a shower of love and pity over the strong man who had done his best to crush her own life as well as his own, under the altar of art that he had tried to raise.

He must have had a heart somewhere, and not merely a score. As she fell on her knees before him with her arms still round him and her tears falling, she felt one warm tear fall on her face, and not her own.

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IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER II. INTRODUCTORY—NUMBER TWO.

"WHAT ought I to do, papa?" The proposition was in the first instance made to Mary through the dean. Lord George had gone to the father, and the father, with many protestations of personal good-will, had declared that in such a matter he would not attempt to bias his daughter. "That the connection would be personally agreeable to myself, I need hardly say," said the dean. "For myself I have no objection to raise. But I must leave it to Mary. I can only say that you have my permission to address her." But the first appeal to Mary was made by her father himself, and was so made in conformity with his own advice. Lord George, when he left the Deanery, had thus arranged it, but had been hardly conscious that the dean had advised such an arrangement. And it may be confessed between ourselves—between me and my readers, who in these introductory chapters may be supposed to be looking back together over past things—that the dean was from the first determined that Lord George should be his son-in-law. What son-in-law could he find that would redound more to his personal credit, or better advance his personal comfort? As to his daughter, where could a safer husband be found? And then she might in this way become a marchioness! His own father had kept livery stables at Bath. Her other grandfather had been a candle-maker in the Borough. "What ought I to do, papa?" Mary asked, when the proposition was first made to her. She of

course admired the Germaines, and appreciated, at perhaps more than its full value, the notice she had received from them. She had thought Lord George to be the handsomest man she had ever seen. She had heard of his love for Miss De Baron, and had felt for him. She was not as yet old enough to know how dull was the house at Manor Cross, or how little of resource she might find in the companionship of such a man as Lord George. Of her own money she knew almost nothing. Nor as yet had her fortune become as a carcase to the birds. And now, should she decide in Lord George's favour, would she be saved at any rate from that danger?

"You must consult your own feelings, my dear," said her father. She looked up to him in blank dismay. She had as yet no feelings.

"But, papa——"

"Of course, my darling, there is a great deal to be said in favour of such a marriage. The man himself is excellent—in all respects excellent. I do not know that there is a young man of higher principles than Lord George in the whole county."

"He is hardly a young man, papa."

"Not a young man! he is thirty. I hope you do not call that old. I doubt whether men in his position of life should ever marry at an earlier age. He is not rich."

"Would that matter?"

"No; I think not. But of that you must judge. Of course, with your fortune you would have a right to expect a richer match. But though he has not money, he has much that money gives. He lives in a large house with noble surroundings. The question is whether you can like him."

"I don't know, papa." Every word she spoke she uttered hesitatingly. When she had asked whether "that would matter," she had hardly known what she was saying. The thing was so important to her, and yet so entirely mysterious and as yet unconsidered, that she could not collect her thoughts sufficiently for proper answers to her father's sensible but not too delicate enquiries. The only ideas that had really struck her were that he was grand and handsome, but very old.

"If you can love him I think you would be happy," said the dean. "Of course you must look at it all round. He will probably live to be the Marquis of Brotherton. From all that I hear I do not think that his brother is likely to marry. In that case you would be the Marchioness of Brotherton, and the property, though not great, would then be handsome. In the meanwhile you would be Lady George Germain, and would live at Manor Cross. I should stipulate on your behalf that you should have a house of your own in town, for, at any rate, a portion of the year. Manor Cross is a fine place, but you would find it dull if you were to remain there always. A married woman, too, should always have some home of her own."

"You want me to do it, papa?"

"Certainly not. I want you to please yourself. If I find that you please yourself by accepting this man, I myself shall be better pleased than if you please yourself by rejecting him; but you shall never know that by my manner. I shall not put you on bread and water, and lock you up in the garret, either if you accept him, or if you reject him." The dean smiled as he said this, as all the world at Brotherton knew that he had never in his life even scolded his daughter.

"And you, papa?"

"I shall come and see you, and you will come and see me. I shall get on well enough. I have always known that you would leave me soon. I am prepared for that." There was something in this which grated on her feelings. She had, perhaps, taught herself to believe that she was indispensable to her father's happiness. Then after a pause he continued: "Of course you must be ready to see Lord George when he comes again, and you ought to remember, my dear, that marquises do not grow on every hedge."

With great care and cunning workmanship one may almost make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but not quite. The care

which Dean Lovelace had bestowed upon the operation in regard to himself had been very great, and the cunning workmanship was to be seen in every plait and every stitch. But still there was something left of the coarseness of the original material. Of all this poor Mary knew nothing at all; but yet she did not like being told of marquises and hedges where her heart was concerned. She had wanted—had unconsciously wanted—some touch of romance from her father to satisfy the condition in which she found herself. But there was no touch of romance there; and when she was left to herself to work the matter out in her own heart and in her own mind she was unsatisfied.

Two or three days after this Mary received notice that her lover was coming. The dean had seen him and had absolutely fixed a time. To poor Mary this seemed to be most unromantic, most unpromising. And though she had thought of nothing else since she had first heard of Lord George's intention, though she had lain awake struggling to make up her mind, she had reached no conclusion. It had become quite clear to her that her father was anxious for the marriage, and there was much in it which recommended it to herself. The old elms of the park of Manor Cross were very tempting. She was not indifferent to being called My Lady. Though she had been slightly hurt when told that marquises did not grow on hedges, still she knew that it would be much to be a marchioness. And the man himself was good, and not only good but very handsome. There was a nobility about him beyond that of his family. Those prone to ridicule might perhaps have called him Werter-faced, but to Mary there was a sublimity in this. But then, was she in love with him?

She was a sweet, innocent, ladylike, high-spirited, joyous creature. Those struggles of her father to get rid of the last porcine taint, though not quite successful as to himself, had succeeded thoroughly in regard to her. It comes at last with due care, and the due care had here been taken. She was so nice that middle-aged men wished themselves younger that they might make love to her, or older that they might be privileged to kiss her. Though keenly anxious for amusement, though over head and ears in love with sport and frolic, no unholy thought had ever polluted her mind. That men were men, and that she was a woman,

had of course been considered by her. Oh, that it might some day be her privilege to love some man with all her heart and all her strength, some man who should be, at any rate to her, the very hero of heroes, the cynosure of her world! It was thus that she considered the matter. There could surely be nothing so glorious as being well in love. And the one to be thus worshipped must of course become her husband. Otherwise would her heart be broken, and perhaps his—and all would be tragedy. But with tragedy she had no sympathy. The loved one must become her husband. But the pictures she had made to herself of him were not at all like Lord George Germain. He was to be fair, with laughing eyes, quick in repartee, always riding well to hounds. She had longed to hunt herself, but her father had objected. He must be sharp enough sometimes to others, though ever soft to her, with a silken moustache and a dimpled chin, and perhaps twenty-four years old. Lord George was dark, his eyes never laughed; he was silent generally, and never went out hunting at all. He was dignified and tall, very handsome, no doubt—and a lord. The grand question was that: could she love him? Could she make another picture, and paint him as her hero? There were doubtless heroic points in the side wave of that coal-black lock—coal-black where the few gray hairs had not yet shown themselves, in his great height, and solemn polished manners.

When her lover came, she could only remember that if she accepted him she would please everybody. The dean had taken occasion to assure her that the ladies at Manor Cross would receive her with open arms. But on this occasion she did not accept him. She was very silent, hardly able to speak a word, and almost sinking out of sight when Lord George endeavoured to press his suit by taking her hand. But she contrived at last to make him the very answer that Adelaide De Baron had made. She must take time to think of it. But the answer came from her in a different spirit. She at any rate knew as soon as it was given that it was her destiny in life to become Lady George Germain. She did not say "Yes" at the moment, only because it is so hard for a girl to tell a man that she will marry him at the first asking! He made his second offer by letter, to which the dean wrote the reply:

"MY DEAR LORD GEORGE,—My daughter

is gratified by your affection, and flattered by your manner of showing it. A few plain words are perhaps the best. She will be happy to receive you as her future husband, whenever it may suit you to come to the Deanery. Yours affectionately,

"HENRY LOVEFACE."

Immediately upon this the conduct of Lord George was unexceptionable. He hurried over to Brotherton, and as he clasped the girl in his arms, he told her that he was the happiest man in England. Poor as he was he made her a handsome present, and besought her if she had any mercy, any charity, any love for him, to name an early day. Then came the four ladies from Manor Cross—for Lady Alice had already become Lady Alice Holdenough—and caressed her, and patted her, and petted her, and told her that she should be as welcome as flowers in May. Her father, too, congratulated her with more of enthusiasm, and more also of demonstrated feeling than she had ever before seen him evince. He had been very unwilling, he said, to express any strong opinion of his own. It had always been his desire that his girl should please herself. But now that the thing was settled he could assure her of his thorough satisfaction. It was all that he could have desired; and now he would be ready at any time to lay himself down, and be at rest. Had his girl married a spendthrift lord, even a duke devoted to pleasure and iniquity, it would have broken his heart. But he would now confess that the aristocracy of the country had charms for him; and he was not ashamed to rejoice that his child should be accepted within their pale. Then he brushed a real tear from his eyes, and Mary threw herself into his arms. The tear was real, and in all that he said there was not an insincere word. It was to him a very glory of glories that his child should be in the way of becoming the Marchioness of Brotherton. It was even a great glory that she should be Lady George Germain. The dean never forgot the livery stable, and owned day and night that God had been very good to him.

It was soon settled that Mary was to be allowed three months for preparation, and that the marriage was to be solemnised in June. Of course she had much to do in preparing her wedding garments, but she had before her a much more difficult task than that, at which she worked most sedulously. It was now the great business of

her life to fall in love with Lord George. She must get rid of that fair young man with the silky moustache and the darling dimple. The fallow, the sublime, and the Werter-faced must be made to take the place of laughing eyes and pink cheeks. She did work very hard, and sometimes, as she thought, successfully. She came to a positive conclusion that he was the handsomest man she ever saw, and that she certainly liked the few gray hairs. That his manner was thoroughly noble no one could doubt. If he were seen merely walking down the street he would surely be taken for a great man. He was one of whom, as her husband, she could be always proud, and that she felt to be a great thing. That he would not play lawn-tennis, and that he did not care for riding, were points in his character to be regretted. Indeed, though she made some tenderly cautious enquiries, she could not find what were his amusements. She herself was passionately fond of dancing, but he certainly did not dance. He talked to her, when he did talk, chiefly of his family, of his own poverty, of the goodness of his mother and sisters, and of the great regret which they all felt that they should have been deserted by the head of their family.

"He has now been away," said Lord George, "for ten years; but not improbably he may return soon, and then we shall have to leave Manor Cross."

"Leave Manor Cross?"

"Of course we must do so should he come home. The place belongs to him, and we are only there because it has not suited him to reside in England."

This he said with the utmost solemnity, and the statement had been produced by the answer which the Marquis had made to a letter announcing to him his brother's marriage. The Marquis had never been a good correspondent. To the ladies of the house he never wrote at all, though Lady Sarah favoured him with a periodical quarterly letter. To his agent, and less frequently to his brother, he would write curt questions on business, never covering more than one side of a sheet of notepaper, and always signed "Yours, B." To these the inmates of Manor Cross had now become accustomed, and little was thought of them; but on this occasion he had written three or four complete sentences, which had been intended to have, and which did have, a plain meaning. He congratulated his brother, but begged

Lord George to bear in mind that he himself might not improbably want Manor Cross for his own purpose before long. If Lord George thought it would be agreeable, Mr. Knox, the agent, might have instructions to buy Miss Lovelace a present. Of this latter offer Lord George took no notice; but the intimation concerning the house sat gravely on his mind.

The dean did exactly as he had said with reference to the house in town. Of course it was necessary that there should be arrangements as to money between him and Lord George, in which he was very frank. Mary's money was all her own—giving her an income of nearly one thousand five hundred pounds per annum. The dean was quite of opinion that this should be left to Lord George's management, but he thought it right, as Mary's father, to stipulate that his daughter should have a home of her own. Then he suggested a small house in town, and expressed an opinion that his daughter should be allowed to live there six months in the year. The expense of such a sojourn might be in some degree shared by himself if Lord George would receive him for a month or so in the spring. And so the thing was settled, Lord George pledging himself that the house should be taken. The arrangement was distasteful to him in many ways, but it did not seem to him to be unreasonable, and he could not oppose it. Then came the letter from the Marquis. Lord George did not consider himself bound to speak of that letter to the dean; but he communicated the threat to Mary. Mary thought nothing about it, except that her future brother-in-law must be a very strange man.

During all these three months she strove very hard to be in love, and sometimes she thought that she had succeeded. In her little way, she studied the man's character, and did all she could to ingratiate herself with him. Walking seemed to be his chief relaxation, and she was always ready to walk with him. She tried to make herself believe that he was profoundly wise. And then, when she failed in other things, she fell back upon his beauty. Certainly she had never seen a handsomer face, either on a man's shoulders or in a picture. And so they were married.

Now I have finished my introduction—having married my heroine to my hero—and have, I hope, instructed my reader as to those hundred and twenty incidents, of which I spoke—not too tediously. If he

will go back and examine, he will find that they are all there. But perhaps it will be better for us both that he should be in quiet possession of them without any such examination.

A DAY AT BOULOGNE.*

THERE used to be a farce with this title that was highly popular in the days of our grandfathers, and which, no doubt, owed its attractions to the peculiar relations then existing between the town and perfidious Albion, significant of which was the title borne by the debtors' prison, viz. the "English Hotel." Those pleasant times of asylum and economy are gone, and it is now nearly as dear as any other watering-place—except, possibly, that hunting-ground of harpies, Ostend. At the modern Boulogne I lately spent a day, being in London at a quarter to eight A.M.; at Boulogne, or Boolong (to speak so as to be intelligible by porters and sailors) a little after noon, and in London again the next morning. The pleasure was of the most simple kind and of an innocent measure, that would have gratified the excellent Dr. Barbauld. In the boat I noted a strange being, whose dress suggested one of the gaudy beetles one sees in museums impaled upon a pin; for it consisted of a highly effective suit, the pattern of which ran in bars across his back. I had no difficulty in recognising an acquaintance who was typically, if not actually, the same as my old friend 'Arry,† whom I had once before seen on his travels. There is a perfectly appropriate relation between the place to which we are hurrying and travellers in beetle-backed garments. Boolong would be incomplete without its 'Arrys. I took delight in talking with him, for there is an artlessness in these creatures, and he told me all his plans with a candour as unsolicited as it was welcome. He beguiled me on the way with his personal narrative, in which "the governor" and "the shop" occupied a large and recurring share. These terms were, however, provokingly figurative; and I could not make out whether the first referred to the worthy being who was responsible for his coming into the world, and being enabled to bear such effective garments; or whether "shop" stood for

a place of counters and goods, or was a gay description of a bachelor residence. I did not like to press him on the point, as your 'Arrys are sensitive. At Boolong, however, he mysteriously disappeared.

The town of Boolong-Sir-Mair has ever an air of gaiety—there is a colour and glitter. Assuredly the French have some mode of invariably making their ports picturesque. No sooner is the basin formed, than the houses begin to range themselves up in an effective manner—something like the scenes in an opera. Gay boards and invitations adorn the streets, and plenty of fishing costumes appear in the foreground. Besides being gay and glittering, Boulogne has a substantial and prosperous air, which many an English town of the same importance lacks. The hotels—as, indeed, have most foreign hotels—have an appetising and festive air, owing to the inviting court and orange-trees, and the glimpses of the tables d'hôte in the long white "eating-room." Nothing can be more cheerful or exhilarating than this entry into a gay foreign hotel, or even the little courtesies and attentions of a simulated welcome—the ringing of bells, the host and his various officials pouring out of the little glass doors and transparent cases, and the first glance at the gay bedrooms.

It has always seemed to me that, for a watering-place, Boulogne is amazingly weak in its sea. The mighty ocean, as it were, seems to "cut the place," hurrying on to Dieppe and Ostend, where it can tumble along in magnificent breakers. In truth, the accommodation for its reception is but of a scrubby kind, though there is an "Establishment," and a fair attempt at bathing-boxes. The former is a pretentious and solid affair enough, and suggests its vis-à-vis at Dover—the Lord Warden Hotel; but it seems rather a depressing place. No; Boulogne is an inland town, with its churches and its "Grand Street" up the hill, its glittering shops, its dainty fish-women, and its mixture of English—gentle and Cockney. This is what offers the true charm.

It was a sultry Sunday—one nearest to the Festival of the Assumption, and the great gala of the year. The town was full. From the railway-station might have been noted the great dome capping the neighbouring hill, which is the church of our Lady of Boulogne, which a simple and untiring priest reared with no other assistants than his own energy, faith, and piety.

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 13, p. 416, "A Day in Calais."

† Ibid., p. 617, "Harry."

This wonderful structure, which is of enormous dimensions, and is enriched inside with paintings and decorations of every kind, is dedicated to the patroness of the fishermen and fishwomen; and this was the fête-day. They are a pious race, and nearly every fishing-port has its gigantic crucifix looking out far over the waters; and, as the boats return or go out to sea in storms, Jacques or Pierre commends himself and his venture in a short prayer to the protection of our Lord.

In the great street, between four and five o'clock, the crowd begins to cluster, and three or four rows of chairs are brought out and cover the pathways. The delay is long, but everyone is patient; and at last the head of this wonderful procession, which takes over an hour to go by, comes in sight. The sun shines out brilliantly, and co-operates to his very best. The invariable "sapper-pumpers," like Dr. Johnson's leg of mutton, ever ill-kept, ill-dressed, and apparently ill-fed, but indispensable creatures, led the way; and then came the endless flights of young girls, in white tulle and wreaths, gliding by up the hill, all graceful and very many pretty. Sometimes, a couple carried a statue on a sort of two-armed stand on their shoulders in a not ungraceful way; while others bore gay banners, which became centres from which fluttered ribbons, which were also held on each side by others. A number of rural parishes round Boulogne had sent their contingents, each led by the imperishable "Swiss," in various uniforms; one in scarlet and gold of surpassing magnificence and proportions. Inote, by-the-way, that in the south of France this gaudy functionary gives place to a sort of chamberlain-looking personage, sober in dress, with a silver chain, and more like an English "verger clad." The variety of schools and dresses, "children of Mary;" the "English young ladies," who held their own very fairly; the nuns; the brothers; and the picturesque acolytes, in scarlet and lace and their little scarlet skull-caps;—made up a gay scene of innumerable colours, and one well worthy of Mr. Frith's brush. Towards the end of the procession came the silver figure of the Blessed Virgin, in a silver ship, carried by sailors of the state, or navy, as we should say. But the most picturesque incident was the fishwomen in their full panoply—those charming fishwomen, who all looked well and even handsome, their grave, composed

faces set off by the most becoming of frilled caps, with gold ornaments, richer Indian capes, and black and scarlet petticoats—all of a fineness that any lady in the land would not have disdained. In the procession were a band of old fishing-dames, in scarlet petticoats, and Indian handkerchiefs bound round their heads; and there were even little miniature fishwomen of ten years old in the same effective dress. At a long interval, when the procession had passed out of sight, came the Bishop of Arras, with his mitre and crozier glittering in the sun, and making but a slow and toilsome progress up the hill, attended by four of that admirable body who, in England, are styled "John Darms." No wonder that he moved slowly, as at every step there was a bright fishwoman starting up, and darting out to hold up her baby to receive a blessing. So our bishop had hard work of it. The spectacle had something very pastoral and pleasing in it.

While I was thus engaged I suddenly caught sight of my beetle-backed acquaintance, standing in a conspicuous place, staring, as the phrase goes, with all his eyes; but I soon saw what was in his little soul. He was intent on fascinating some of the "gurls" by his remarkable raiment, and I am not sure that he did not succeed in, at least, attracting their notice. I was afraid of his compromising me by a greeting, so I discreetly shifted my position, and viewed the rest of the procession from another place.

There is something curious in dining in France one day and dining the preceding and succeeding days in England. The table d'hôte is a sudden and agreeable change. The French voices, the good dishes, the "forty feeding like one," and the one waiter attending like forty. Indeed, I have seen this prodigy of one waiter attending thirty people, and attending efficiently, though a long table d'hôte. After the dinner there was the pretty theatre, with the opera, *Les Dragons de Villars*, or the horsemanship on the quays, where we were entertained with purely English clowns, whose buffoonings were truly Flemish and gross. The artist, however, who played the fiddle with his toes, working the strings with his right foot and holding the bow with the left, carried off all the honours.

I suppose it was fully three months afterwards, when—may I make the confession without shocking a too refined reader?—as I was seated in an omnibus,

not making the excuse that there was no cab, the rain coming suddenly on, but simply because I occasionally ride in such vehicles; when someone seemed to take a sort of liberty in stooping across and nudging me, saying at the same time; "You reckhurlect that 'ere Sunday!"

There was nothing zebra or beetle-like in his clothes, but his voice, rather than face, came back upon me.

"Oh," I said, "to be sure—Boulogne."

"Yes, Boolong," he repeated. "Oh, it's been the making of me. Tip-top place. Wish I was there now."

"Then, you enjoyed yourself?"

"Enjoyed myself! That's not the word. It was rare. Bless you, I'm no more the same person, the guv'nor says. What I say is, if you have anyone that wants polishing, send 'em over to Boolong. Look at me!"

We had a long ride before us, so I encouraged his garrulity.

"Tell me," I said, "your adventures;" and so he did, to the following effect:

"Well, I think that we have a great deal to learn from the foreigner; and as such I used to speak of him, and to him, as mussoo and munseer, and the like. I now own that my eyes are opened, since I have been at Boolong. It is a delightful place, and the natives—Mess-yer Lay Frawnsay, I mean—are worthy, agreeable folks. Another delusion, by-the-way, exploded. We don't know how to pronounce the Frawnsay; we have a jargon of our own and father it on them. Now no Frenchman says munseer, as I was taught to say, but moose-your, or 'yer.' Bless yer, I have a nice ear for this sort of thing.

"What I like at a gay place like Boolong, is the easy cordial footing on which a fellow is at once established—that is, if he knows how to behave. They are the nicest people in the world, as I found at the Dwan, Th' Hôtel de Dwan. Bless you! the very first day—and I must tell you I was prejudiced against the Dwan at first, as it was up a sort of stable lane, the walls a raw yal—yellow, I mean, and the—may I say—smell, beyond belief. But bless you, as I was saying, the very first day—lur premyer mo-mo— I was dazeillusion-honeyed. Le Pay, our landlord, whom I had a long chat with every morning, regular, and who, whenever I went in or went out of the koor, took off his hat to me, brought me in to the Tarble dirt. And mark that distinction, for you perpetually hear your

vulgar English talking with an air of the Table doat, whereas, you must avoid these full hard sounds, and soften off, sir. 'Dirt' is not it exactly, I know, but it comes very near it if said in a sharp off-hand way—'tarble dirt.' I suppose about twenty people all got in somehow into this gay little room, no larger than a small shop, the two ends of the white tables sticking into the windows. Oh, I so like the ways and habits of the French. Thus, when I sat down, a crisp gentleman said pleasantly—to put me at my ease, you see—'Come by the London boat, sir? Le Pay says it was late.' I saw the ladies at each side listening, so I told all I knew, and in ten minutes I was perfectly shay m'war. And this I noticed during my stay at Boolong, that we were all so affable and in good spirits, especially coming in in full dress, you know; ladies in ribbons and best caps, the gurls, smart as on a Sunday; and no corking up or fixing you with a stare, as if you were something low, you know, but a sort of freedom, and even a leanin' to flirtation. Bless you, I used to come out, I know, in a style which I never did on this side of the water. But some way you don't meet such nice people. There were two gurls—the Miss Pickfords—no relation to the great van people, for I asked them. I didn't know which I liked the best—Lewheeze, the eldest, or Adale, the second. They were always laughing, and I used to sit with them in the koor laughing and chaffing, and, in fact, saying anything that came into my head. The elders never troubled us, and indeed, I used to attend my fair charmers to the Ban—not Bang, as you so commonly hear. One of the gurls described the life as the 'far knee aunty;' on which, to give an idea of the flow of spirits of the place, I said on the spur of the moment, that I liked the 'near knee, aunty.' And would you believe it, at the Tarble dirt old Mr. Pickford began to allude to it, so that the gurls must have told it upstairs, and Mrs. P. said she was beginning to be afraid of me, as she heard I was quite a wit. I never met nicer people. Certainly the French have the art of society. By-and-by I knew everybody in the Dwan. It seems to be now like a dream every morning coming down to breakfast, and we so delighted to see each other. I always shook hands with Adale—she was my one, you will have guessed—and old Pickford was so nice in his blue tie and white waistcoat, and Mrs. Pickford, a plain woman enough,

but so kind and interested. I liked Pay himself, and Mrs. Pay, who had manners a countess might have envied, and was so studiously respectful to Mr. 'Peekfor.' I said she ought to be called 'Pay-day,' as she made out the bills, and Adale insisted on telling this to papa, who I thought would have split—I mean with laughing. He told it across the table—and would you imagine my 'orror!—to Madame Pay herself. But it made not the least difference in her demeanour to me, though of course I made the almond honorable in her case. As to dressing, you could dress any way; indeed, the more any way the better.

"Now I could tell you a good thing about that. By a sort of providence, I had put up among my other traps, really not thinking it of any importance, a little cap, made up of blue and white triangles alternately, something after the fashion of a racing-cap. This I had on one morning at my room door, when old Pickford said, 'Halloo, what a stunning cap!' As usual, it soon travelled—the allusion, I mean—through the family, and the gurls insisted on seeing it. Its popularity was at once settled, with the result that I ever after attended them in it to the 'Establishment'—you know I mean what they call the 'Eatableseemung'—too foreign a word. What a happy family we were! I know I could have walked and walked up the Grawn Roo, and down the Grawn Roo, looking in at the shops in the Le Kew, or down again to the Paw, always attending Adale and Lewheeze. Yet the Paw always made me sad; for did not the London boat depart from the Paw?—and by the London boat I must return to the place from whence I came. For funds were getting low, and it was nigh the end of the week, and Pay was charging at the rate of wheat frawn a day—moderate they said, but it seemed a large sum. But then you had varng cumpree, to the amount of a demmy bootile. We fared like fighting-cocks. Each day was like a swell set-out dinner—your potarge; your fish; your ontrays; your pullar, and your humar, and your beshamels—so called, I said, because they had the 'besht smells' of the whole. The convulsions this threw the whole table into! Then there was always cheese given, because old Pickford asked for it, and we said it was charming in the Pays, who made no extra charge: as they said 'Snay reean!' But still wheat frawn a day,

even Too cumpree, was heavy. I was so happy among these French people, I must contrive to pull it in some other way. Besides, at other houses, such as the Nor, they were charging Kangs and even says frawn a day, and in case of a private sallun, it ran up to van frawn.

"You should have seen us in the drawing-room of an evening, which was really our own room; Madame Pay always making it understood that the 'can her pay' was reserved for Mrs. Pickford—her footstool, 'come pree?' But alas! all this was too splendid to last. And most unfortunately, just at the end, everything was spoiled when I ventured on this little joke—Mrs. Pickford is like a Scotch-woman—and said, with a half-conscious smile, 'She canna' pay.' 'How do you mean, sir?' said old Mr. Pickford gravely. 'What do you mean?' The gurls got red, I noticed. I had hurt them. 'You don't mean it,' said Adale, 'but it was unkind.' 'It was only my fun,' I said. 'I hope so. But papa is seriously angry, you know, he loves mamma so.' I was abject in my apologies, but old Pickford looked at me now always in a very hostile way. He even was snappish, and when I said something as to these 'dear good Pays,' who seemed 'to me like a father and mother,' he said that they were impudent, forward cheats, and that he thought that he would have to leave them. But the strangest of all, I noticed, was the alteration in the good Pays. There was a glass Bewrow in his garden, where bills were paid—the proper word is 'case'—and that very evening, coming down in the blue-and-white cap, I heard the most excited language proceeding from the case and from the two good Pays—both speaking excellent English—assailing Mrs. Pickford. Now, hitherto he had always answered the Pickfords and other guests in a French, corresponding to that in which he was addressed—a kind of broken tongue by which we made ourselves understood. How, I don't know; but he had certainly always answered me respectfully, in a way that showed he understood. Now, I did not speak French well, or, at least, so well as I do now; and certainly it was painful to hear old Pickford's wretched attempts as a linguist. Yet Pay always answered him gravely; and here was Pay gesticulating, and thumping, and spitting! such a change! and madame almost screaming.

"But I could not learn the meaning of all this, for alas! here I had to go by the

London boat. It was Friday, and she sailed at midnight. Indeed, the London boat was always fond of going at three or four in the morning, or some such unearthly hour. 'Why not go by the express?' said Adale, again and again. 'You do not want for money.'

"We were having a farewell walk, when all was made up.

"No," I said valiantly, 'I am first-class in that way. You must come and see me in London. It has been a very pleasant time. Oh, I said pleasant—that's not the word; Hurroo—that's what I've been.' She started for a second but understood. Then she looked round hurriedly. 'May I trust you with a little secret? Pay has been cruelly insolent to papa, and papa says he will not stop another day with him; but he has him in his power.' 'Who?' I said, 'he or Pay?' 'Well, papa thought you knew this, and were joking on his position. But on Thursday our agent is sending the remittances. Now, if I were you, I'd go to papa—of myself—and I think, if anything would remove the rather bitter feeling he has, it would be that you offered, until Thursday, to——' 'But I have no money,' I said, 'I assure you, after paying Pay.' She did not laugh at the joke—odd, wasn't it?—'I shall have but one and sixpence left to bring me from St. Katharine's-wharf. But I've spent a most happy week, and I shall never, never forget Pay's.' Someway, I was always alluding to this. 'Well, tell papa that you will write; you will be there to-morrow, and we will have it on Monday.' 'I'll not let a minute pass without writing.' 'But I mean about Pay,' she said pettishly. 'Or, wait,' she went on, eagerly, 'write to me! Papa need know nothing.' Nice and delicate of Adale; but I liked her too well not to be frank. 'I am quite run out, you see. I have been so extravagant here, and Boolong is a dear place; so I shall have to pull in ever so long to make up.' She turned from me with contempt, I really think.

"I confess we had rather a dismal dinner, and, after a farewell, I set out at midnight by my London boat. On paying my bill to Pay he spoke of my friends, and said they were a lot of 'Scrokes.' What on earth did he mean? No matter, I spent a most delightful time, and I say again, that there is nothing like French society."

Such was 'Arry's story. And the omnibus presently stopped, when he got

down and parted from me with the renewed assurance, that "if I knew anyone that wanted polishing, I need only send 'em to Boolong."

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

It is astonishing how little interest is taken in Chelsea Hospital, or the Royal Hospital at Chelsea as it is officially called. Yet that home for old soldiers has a curious origin and history, and a visit to it strongly stimulates the memory and imagination. It is a popular article of belief that pretty, witty, graceless Nell Gwynne to some extent atoned for an ill-spent life by inducing her royal lover to found this asylum for decayed warriors. It is no less firmly credited that the institution is maintained by the liberality of the State. We shall see that on both points the public has been misinformed.

In the parliamentary session beginning 19th November, 1592, and ending 10th April, 1593, was passed the first statute giving a legal provision to disabled soldiers. This Act directed that rates should be levied in parishes, out of which the justices in quarter sessions should grant to soldiers and marines who were disabled by wounds or sickness rates not exceeding ten pounds a year to a private soldier, fifteen pounds to one who had borne office under the rank of lieutenant, and twenty pounds to any who had served as lieutenant. This Act was often evaded, and another with the same object, passed in 1597, was not much more effectual. A great step in advance was, however, taken in 1648, when parliament ordered certain sums to be appropriated from the sequestrations and the excise, for the maintenance of maimed soldiers. In 1681, Sir Stephen Fox, the first paymaster-general of the forces, conceived the idea of Chelsea Hospital, and induced the king to take steps to accomplish the object. There is not one tittle of evidence to show that Nell Gwynne had anything to do with the matter. She was not even one of the subscribers to the fund. It was hoped that the public would have contributed largely, but in addition to one thousand three hundred pounds from Sir Stephen Fox and one thousand pounds from Tobias Rustal, a former page of the back stairs, only two thousand three hundred and forty-seven pounds was thus raised. The king added six thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven pounds four shillings

and twopence-halfpenny, the unapplied balance of secret service money. It was sought to make use of the bishops as agents to collect subscriptions; but as the Archbishop of York sensibly observed, "we can neither follow lords and gentlemen to their houses, nor summon them to meet us." Consequently this device for raising funds failed. It was therefore resolved to obtain money from the troops themselves, in the following ingenious but somewhat mean manner. Sir Stephen Fox, on assuming office in 1661, found that it was the practice to issue pay to the troops long after it had become due. This was a great hardship, and Sir Stephen arranged that a portion of the pay under the head of subsistence should be issued weekly, and the balance after the next muster. In return for this accommodation he deducted twelvepence in the pound from the pay, and appropriated the proceeds to his own benefit. This system found great favour with the army, but it became necessary to abandon it eighteen years later on account of the difficulties of the revenue. The king then issued a royal warrant in which it was laid down that the muster rolls should be completely paid off before the end of the succeeding winter, and that in return for such regularity of payment the deduction of twelvepence in the pound should be continued. In May, 1683, letters of privy seal directed that one-third of this poundage, with retrospective action to the 1st January, 1681, should be devoted to Chelsea Hospital. In 1684 it was ordered that a day's pay should be deducted annually from every officer's and soldier's pay, to be applied to the same purpose. In 1686 a second third of the poundage was assigned to the hospital, and a little later the whole of the poundage—after deducting the expenses of the paymaster-general, and the commissary-general of musters, and the exchequer fees—was handed over to the hospital. In 1692 half-pay officers were required to contribute sixpence in the pound from their pay, and in 1715 officers on retired full pay were compelled to submit to a deduction of twelvepence in the pound. In 1685 James the Second assigned one hundred chaldrons of coal, being the rent of the castle of Newcastle leased to the corporation. Warrants issued, one in 1684 and another in 1711, directed that when officers sold their commissions, both buyer and seller should pay twelvepence in the pound for the use of Chelsea Hos-

pital. Each of these warrants appear to have been in force only a few months. In 1754 twelvepence in the pound from the money paid in army out-pensions was ordered to be assigned to Chelsea Hospital. In 1833 this poundage was reduced by half, and in 1847 ceased altogether. Between 1792 and 1847 unclaimed prize money to the amount of five hundred and seventy-eight thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine pounds thirteen shillings and fivepence was handed over to Chelsea Hospital. Poundage of twelvepence from daily pay ceased in 1831, on retired, full, or half pay in 1783. The deduction of one day's pay in a year came to an end in 1831. The contributions, legacies, rents of land, value of coals from Newcastle, &c., amounted in 1846-47 to sixty-two thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight pounds thirteen shillings and one penny. The votes from the exchequer, i.e. the contributions from the State, had by 1846-47 reached the amount of fifty millions one hundred and forty-seven thousand and twenty-eight pounds thirteen shillings and threepence; but against this must be set the payment to out-pensioners of fifty-one millions five hundred and seventy-six thousand and thirty-five pounds nine shillings and twopence.

It will therefore be apparent that Chelsea Hospital has been entirely supported by the army, and owes nothing whatever to the liberality of the State. The late chaplain-general, in his Traditions of Chelsea College, justly observes: "Within the walls of Chelsea Hospital the veteran has indeed nothing to complain of, but why? Because the establishment is his own, built by his own or his predecessors' money, supported out of funds which the nation never gave. . . . The in-pensioner, therefore, though he has no complaint to make, owes nothing to the generosity of the House of Commons."

Chelsea Hospital was originally called Chelsea College. The lands about Chelsea and Battersea were formerly church property, belonging to the abbot of Westminster. At the Reformation all but a small portion passed into the hands of private owners. On a part of the reserved land James the First resolved to build a college for the study of polemical divinity. The building was begun, but after a short time progress was stopped for want of funds. Under the Commonwealth Chelsea College was used as a place of confinement for political offenders and

prisoners of war. A few years after the Restoration the building and adjoining lands were granted to the Royal Society. In 1681 the latter sold this grant to the king, who handed it over to Sir Stephen Fox that a hospital for disabled soldiers might be constructed. Nevertheless the term "college" is that by which it is generally known both by the pensioners and the neighbours. The first stone of the new building was laid by the king on the 17th February, 1682, and the work had made, on the 1st April, 1692, sufficient progress to allow of the admission of the first batch of pensioners. A few days earlier the first commissioners were appointed, and among them was the celebrated architect, Sir Christopher Wren. At that time Chelsea town was quite in the country, and so many robberies took place for many years after on the secluded road leading to London that, in 1715, it was ordered that a guard of in-pensioners should patrol between Chelsea and St. James's Palace from nightfall up to midnight. This practice lasted till as late as 1805.

The most interesting part of the building is the great hall. Here, in 1803, General Whitelocke was tried for his conduct at Buenos Ayres. Here, in the November of the same year, was examined Major-General the Hon. Sir Arthur Wellesley, by the court of enquiry on the convention of Cintra; and here, fifty-four years later, lay in state the remains of the same Sir Arthur, who had, within six years from the date of his examination, risen to the rank of duke and field-marshal, and had obtained the insignia of most of the knightly orders in Europe. Formerly, the room was used as a dining-hall. When we visited it, we found the old pensioners smoking, playing at games, and reading newspapers or periodicals. The old men, indeed, looked like members of a soldiers' Senior United Service Club. Both chapel and hall are hung with captured standards. In the hall are to be seen the remains of French colours captured in Marlborough's wars, together with other trophies of a similar description. The extensive and pretty grounds are, with the exception of a portion reserved for the officers of the institution, thrown open to the public. On the day of our visit, the weather was fine, and the veterans might be seen strolling about the garden, or seated in slow and solemn meditation on the numerous benches. In one corner is the kitchen-garden, in which plots are

assigned to those pensioners who care for cultivating them. A part of the grounds was formerly included in the estates of Richard, Earl of Ranelagh, who died in 1712. Some years after his death, the portion alluded to was let to Lacey, patentee of Drury-lane Theatre. He projected and eventually carried out a plan of constructing public gardens, which were well known in the last century under the name of Ranelagh and the Rotunda. In 1803, a splendid entertainment was given by the Knights of the Bath to celebrate the Peace of Amiens. The late Sir Alexander Woodford, governor of the hospital, who died in 1872, used to relate that, as a young officer of the Guards, he had been present at this fête. The place, for some unaccountable reason, went out of fashion immediately after this entertainment, and it was closed in July, 1803. When we visited the gardens the other day, one of the iron hooks by which lamps were, on the occasion of fêtes, suspended from the trees, was pointed out to us. Going inside the building, we were shown over one of the wards or galleries. These are long, lofty, airy apartments, with the inner half—i.e. the half farthest from the windows—divided into what may be termed cabins. These cabins contain the bed of the occupant and a little furniture. Some of them had the door opening into the gallery unclosed, and we could see that the walls were all hung round with photographs and coloured prints. Very cheerful and snug they looked.

In the gallery the men take their meals in messes of about twelve each. The pensioners in the lower wards being very infirm, orderlies are paid to bring them up their breakfast and dinner. The tea is made in the wards themselves. The rations are good, ample, and afford satisfaction. Each man receives daily one pound of bread, one ounce of butter, a quarter of a pint of the best new milk; with three-quarters of an ounce of cocoa, and one ounce of moist sugar, for breakfast, and one-sixth of an ounce of tea, and three-quarters of an ounce of moist sugar, for tea. For dinner, each man has, on Sunday, thirteen ounces of beef, one pound of potatoes, and plum pudding. On Wednesdays, he gets ten ounces of bacon, and one pound of cabbage or other vegetable. On the other five days he obtains thirteen ounces of mutton, one pound of potatoes, and one-and-a-half ounce of Scotch barley. A sufficient quantity of herbs, oatmeal, salt, pepper, and mustard is supplied. On

Fridays, half-a-pound of cheese is served out, and every day a pint of porter. On the Queen's and Prince of Wales' birthdays, the restoration of Charles the Second, and Christmas-day, eighteen ounces of best roasting beef is given instead of the ordinary ration of meat.

A pensioner's friends, male or female, are allowed to pay him visits in the ward. Indeed, everything is done to make the old men as comfortable as possible, and to impose no more restraint than is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of good order. There is very little duty; in fact, the only obligatory duty is sentry work. There are two sentries, but these only mount guard by day, and when relieved go to their own rooms, instead of a guard-room. Night duty is performed by in-pensioners, three to each gate, who are paid extra for acting as watchmen. The pensioners need have no dread of cold. There is a reasonable supply of coal, and the four lower wards are further warmed by coke stoves. The clothing is warm and sufficient. On great occasions, and at full-dress parades, the three-cornered cocked hats, which date, we should imagine, from the days of Marlborough, are worn; at other times, a forage-cap. There is very little crime, and the offenders are leniently dealt with. Almost the only punishment is confinement to the college for a few days, or, in aggravated cases, expulsion.

The general air of the pensioners was one of grave but rather feeble contentment. When we visited Chelsea, we spoke to several of the men, and as far as we could ascertain, the only complaint was, that those who gave up a large out-pension received no larger amount of pay than those who had surrendered a comparatively small pension. The complaint is, however, scarcely well-founded, for there are different classes with different rates of pay, and those belonging to the higher classes are generally the men who previously enjoyed the largest out-pension. The number of in-pensioners is five hundred and thirty-eight. Of these, six are colour-sergeants, at tenpence a day; twenty-four sergeants, at eightpence; twenty-four corporals, at fourpence; six drummers, at threepence; fifty privates, at twopence; fifty ditto, at three halfpence; three hundred and seventy-eight ditto, at one penny. Besides this pay, a certain number of pensioners receive allowances for the voluntary performance of extra duties. For instance, six cooks get one

shilling a day, and twenty-five ward orderlies at half-a-crown a week.

What we were much struck with was, the few men who were minus an arm or a leg. Only about eight are thus maimed, but a large proportion are terribly broken-down from age, disease, or wounds. From a return dated 6th March, 1870, it appears that there were ninety-two men in the infirmary, and two hundred and eighty-five out-patients, requiring more or less constant medical attention. Nothing can exceed the care bestowed upon the inmates of the infirmary, who receive the most liberal diet, and are tenderly nursed. How well the pensioners are looked after may be judged from returns, which show that, though during the fourteen years ending 31st December, 1869, the average age on admission was sixty-one years and ten months, the average age at death was seventy-one years and two months. In that time there were, out of one thousand one hundred and nine deaths, one hundred and thirty-seven from eighty to eighty-four inclusive; forty-eight between eighty-five and eighty-nine; four at ninety; two at ninety-two; one at ninety-four; one at ninety-five; one at one hundred, and one at one hundred and eight. We are not told when the man one hundred and eight years old died, but assuming that his death took place in 1862, what a wonderfully far-stretching link he was with the past! Entering the army say at eighteen in 1772, he may have fought at Bunker's-hill, and in a casual visit to Chelsea, have conversed with men who took part in the wars of William the Third. His active career terminated probably before the struggle in the Peninsula began, and his memory was no doubt stored with barrack-room traditions of Fontenoy, Dettingen, Minden, and Culloden. During the same fourteen years, the average yearly number of men dismissed was seven; men sent to lunatic asylums, one and five-sevenths; and of those who left the hospital at their own request, twenty-nine. We may mention that pensioners frequently return to the hospital after having left it. When we paid our visit, there was one old man, ninety-two years of age, McKay by name; he was a native of Sutherlandshire, had served in the Peninsula, and at Waterloo in the Black Watch. He had been wounded in the face at Badajos, and in the hand at Waterloo. At Badajos, he told us, he had seen a man hanged for stealing vegetables. Quite lively and alert was the old fellow,

able to walk about the garden, and in full possession of his mental faculties. There was another man, bed-ridden, a year older, but little information was to be got out of him. In the now closed and disused burial-ground of the hospital, an inscription states, that William Hiesland died on the 17th February, 1732, aged one hundred and twelve years, and that when one hundred, he married! He must have been among the first admitted into the hospital, and if his age is correctly given, it is possible that he took part in the Civil War between Charles the First and his Parliament.

When Greenwich was disestablished, there was some thought of subjecting Chelsea to the same treatment. Fortunately, the idea was abandoned. The average amount of out-pension surrendered was, up to 1870, about tenpence, the rate ranging from fivepence to two shillings and elevenpence-halfpenny. Deducting the surrendered pension, the average cost of an in-pensioner is about two shillings and threepence a day, but it is very certain that the average care and comfort enjoyed by each pensioner would not be obtained for less than double that amount. In fact, under scarcely any circumstances could a pensioner be so well looked after outside, as inside the hospital. A good deal of evidence was taken on this subject, and some of the witnesses gave replies which were full of unconscious pathos. One, a private still serving, said—in reply to the question, “I suppose you are beginning to think you should like to return home to your friends?”—“Yes, to what are left of them.” Another private, an Irishman, replied to a question as to which he would prefer, going home on a pension, or entering Chelsea Hospital, “I should like to go home to my own country, and be buried in my father’s grave;” and subsequently, “I have no home, no friends, or relations, except a brother; still I would like to be buried in my own country, and I have often prayed that I might be buried in my father’s grave.” His officers would no doubt have been surprised, could they have heard this old soldier speak thus. He admitted that, during his twenty-five years’ service, he had received every sort of punishment; yet in this apparently reckless, battered veteran, there still beat a heart full of soft and tender memories. The general feeling of the majority of the men examined was, that if the pension were increased to, say, four shillings a day, they would prefer

being with their friends; but many are infirm, and have no friends. We therefore fully endorse the opinion of the committee, viz. “it is very certain that no increase of pension that could be given would compensate for the comforts, both in lodging, food, and medical attendance, afforded by the hospital to those who are without friends, and are incapacitated by infirmities from taking care of themselves.”

LOVED AT LAST.

AND so he loves me, though they said
No lover e’er would come to me,
That I should ne’er be wooed or wed,
Or nurse a child upon my knee;
They were so sure that I should miss
The woman’s heritage of bliss.

And I, too, in the sad gray hours,
When through low clouds no sunlight shone,
And when the slow September showers
Seemed nature’s tears for summer gone,
I murmured with a long sad sigh,
“My summer also has gone by!”

But now I know that what to me
Seemed autumn rains were showers of spring;
Summer has come, and now I see
Love’s sunlight brighten everything;
He says he loves me, and to-day
My year rolls back to early May.

How did it come? I ask of him:
He says my face is sweet and fair;
And yet to me these eyes seem dim,
And on this brow are lines of care:
But now these eyes shall yet be bright,
And once again this brow grow light.

He loves me! loves me! I repeat
The blest assurance every hour;
And now the wine of life is sweet,
That yesterday was sharp and sour:
Now I can drink, with spirit bold,
Love’s nectar from a cup of gold.

I look through long slow-coming years,
Made by his love all bright and fair;
I look around through happy tears,
And see his image everywhere;
In his great love I breathe and live:
If it be sin, dear God, forgive.

It cannot be Since I have known
His love, God’s love seems dearer too;
He has come near to me, and shown
What for the humblest he can do.
Life’s fateful fingers intertwine
The human love with the divine.

Oh love, love, love! Oh blessed word,
That never did I understand
Till in my ear his voice I heard,
And felt the pressure of his hand:
No more I walk with eyes cast down,
I am his queen, love is my crown.

A CALIFORNIAN CONJURING TRICK.

A STORY.

NIGHT and day, for seven days and nights in every week, and fifty-two weeks in every year—that was the way that the gaming-houses carried on their business in California in the good old times, some

thirty years or so ago. Latterly, on the Rhine—even before victorious and pious Berlin had finally decided that the Berlin royal lotteries were the only form in which gambling could be tolerated—Sunday closing was enforced with very impartial rigour. And even now in the pleasant little principality where the black and red have found their last public European refuge, and which Nature seems to have thoughtfully constructed of the exact size required to hold the tables and their staff without further room for any disturbing influence, the cards cease to fall and the little ball to roll every night at twelve o'clock, and for one whole day in every year. We were not so particular in Frisco by any means. When it grew dark, we lighted the lamps. When we happened to look up for a moment from our game, and found that they were no longer required, we put them out again. That was the only difference ever made by the flight of time at the El Dorado.

A handsome establishment was that El Dorado, about the handsomest, if I remember rightly, that Frisco at that time could boast. Not that it was in any way palatial. The palatial days of Frisco had not then begun. But it was a good-sized room, with more attempt at ornament about it than was common in the architecture of the period, and costing perhaps in the way of rent something like two or three good houses in Lombard-street.

It must indeed be admitted that in those days the rent was the strong feature of your Friscan house. The fabric itself might leave something to be desired. True, there were advantages in it. If your house was—as it probably was—only one story high, you were saved all trouble in climbing stairs. If it consisted—as it probably would consist—of, at the utmost, a couple of rooms, let us say, to be liberal, a dozen feet square, why there you had everything under your hand, and might sling your luxurious Mexican hammock from one corner to the other and never stir from it unless you felt inclined. If it and its surroundings—walls, roof, floors, everything even to the ground on which it stood, and the plank pavement of the street outside—were all of thin dry wood, just a “box of matches” ready to take fire from the first stray spark of your pipe, you were at least saved the annoyance when it did take fire of having to think whether there was any possibility of putting it out again. Still with all these

points in its favour, it must be admitted that a San Franciscan mansion thirty years ago would have taxed the descriptive eloquence of the late Mr. George Robins. Fortunately—from a landlord's point of view—descriptive eloquence was not required. If you had a house to let you just mentioned casually, as its rent, the biggest number of dollars you could happen at the moment to call to mind, and the bargain was closed before you had time to add another cent.

The El Dorado stood, as you may suppose, in one of the best situations in the town, just down at the corner of the Plaza, that huge bare wilderness of dust or mud, like a Brobdingnagian drying-ground with only one pole left in the middle. That was the great liberty-pole. I don't quite know what a liberty-pole means by the way, though I have seen a good many of them. But whatever it may have meant, that liberty-pole of the Plaza had one association which marks it out in my mind to this day distinct from any other erection in all Frisco. You have “done” your Cologne, and your Rome, and your Naples, and all the rest of them of course, and can recall—rather vaguely, perhaps, but never mind that—the monuments of interest, cathedrals, churches, hôtels-de-ville, picture-galleries, statues, and whatnot, to which you were “personally conducted” in the course of that self-inflicted penance. Well, when you did your Frisco in those good old days—and they were good old days, mind you, from a Friscan point of view—you were not bothered with anything of that kind. The one claim to distinction to be put forward on behalf of any particular building, or monument, or what you will, was that So-and-so had been hanged there. I remember being puzzled at first to understand why a different door or window, or a fresh lamp or sign post, should have been selected in each case for carrying out the decrees of that unquestionable saviour of San Franciscan society, Mr. Justice Lynch. But I soon found that the selection was in most instances simply a “natural” one, determined solely by the eternal fitness for suspensory purposes of the first pole, lamp-post, door, window or otherwise that came to hand after the offender had been caught. Now to this golden rule the big liberty-pole was, I believe, the one solitary exception. Nobody had been hanged upon it. They had got a couple of offenders there once, caught close by in the very act of pilfering—we

didn't hang for minor offences, manslaughter and such like—and had swarmed the pole, and fixed the block, and rove fairly through it the slack ends of the two ropes already round the culprits' necks. But before they had been hauled halfway up, some sentimental patriot had shouted from the crowd a request "not to desecrate the liberty-pole," and the half-hanged offenders had been promptly lowered down and hurried off, ropes and all, to perfect their strangulation in some less sacred spot. But this is a digression. *Revenons à nos moutons*, flocking in to be shorn in the gaily-decorated, brilliantly-lighted, tobacco-befogged saloon of the El Dorado.

We were a roughish lot, I am afraid, at the El Dorado, and we looked it. There was a sprinkling of "stove-pipe" hats here and there of course, to say nothing of swallow-tailed coats, black pants, and satin vests. But, as a rule, our costume was rather picturesque than fashionable; its principal features being huge horseskin boots with the trousers tucked loosely into them, red flannel shirt more or less weatherstained, a ragged felt or Panama hat, and a chevelure free from any contamination of razor, brush, or comb. Not a promising-looking flock by any means, but with a marvellous yield of wool.

Six months and more some of these wild, red-shirted, hairy men would have been away on their claims, toiling from daybreak to dusk in drenching rain, and cutting wind and scorching sun, handling pick and shovel and cradle, hour after hour and day after day, with that fierce energy which knows neither relaxation nor respite, except such as comes perforce when friendly night makes further toil impossible. Nor even that sometimes. There were those who, when "pay-dirt" was rich or nuggets plentiful, and the fruitless labour perhaps of many weeks began to find its ample reward at last, could not find it in their hearts to succumb even to the darkness, but toiled madly on by flaring torch or blazing fire until pick and shovel fairly dropped from their worn-out hands, and the exhausted digger slept where he fell in the muddy trench, which looked in the gray morning light like some huge, self-dug grave.

And so at last the "pile" had been made, and the sheep had set off—without any previous ceremony of washing—to carry his ragged golden fleece to Frisco to be shorn.

I did not stay in Frisco long enough to be quite positive of the fact, but it certainly struck me that it was by the gentlemen in the swallow-tailed coats, black pants, and satin vests that this necessary operation was chiefly performed. The proprietors of the gaming-houses seemed all to be of the stove-pipe persuasion, and to them, of course, a considerable share of the booty fell. But they were not by any means the monopolists that the proprietors of our Continental kursaals are. *Trente-et-quarante* there was none. That is much too staid a dissipation for the stormy requirements of your Californian digger "on the burst." The roulette—its cylinder carefully guarded by strong wire defences against any excess of energy in the casting of the stakes—attracted a fair number of votaries, and the *monté-table* a still larger. But the richest fleeces seemed commonly to be falling at the small private tables, where little parties of four would dash through rubber after rubber of enche under the admiring eyes of a small gallery of red shirts and Panama hats, and little handfuls of primitive dust or nuggets would follow the fortunes of the cards, without any need of the conventional aid of counters or cash. Some of these little tables are occupied exclusively by the red-shirted fraternity, and here the dust and the nuggets, or the dollars for which they have been exchanged, pass rapidly from hand to hand and back again, as cards vary or skill may tell. But there is a stovepipe or two at most of them, and whatever may be the fluctuations of the game, it seems to be but rarely that its owner rises a very serious loser.

There is another respect, too, in which the play-room of the El Dorado differs materially from those of Germany, Italy, or Switzerland. The decorous, almost solemn silence which reigns in these is in the former quite unknown. We trouble as little about company manners as about company clothes, and shout and laugh and swear with as ingenuous freedom, as though in the sacred privacy of our own pet gully a hundred miles away. Sometimes, in the warmth of argument, we find that mere words, even of the most comminatory description, fail to convey the full expression of our feelings, and then, perhaps, a "repeater" or two will come out and join in the discussion with considerable effect. It is easy, however, to distinguish the bark of a Colt or a Derringer from the popping of a champagne cork; and if you drop

quickly into the nearest vacant chair and "sit low," you will find yourself, after the first shot or two, in little comparative danger—unless, of course, they are fired at you. Even in such case, however, there is probably some previous warning in the shape of the exchange of at least a phrase or two, and all you have to do is to keep a careful eye upon the movements of your opponent—and fire first.

I think it was the very first time I ever set foot in the El Dorado, that I was an eyewitness of the strange scene which I am about to describe.

There was one man among the players that evening who had attracted my attention from the first. He was a tall, powerful fellow, standing in his mud-soiled, horse-skin boots, a full head higher than almost anyone in the room, and with a full blue eye and broad open face, with very much more of the Englishman about it than the Yankee. His once scarlet shirt was decidedly ragged and stained to almost every tint not to be found in the rainbow; his face, so much of it at least as was not hidden under a mighty light-brown beard, was burned almost to a brick colour, as were also his hands, torn and scarred by rough and reckless toil. But the big brown beard was carefully combed, the curly hair cropped short, the scarred hands not small indeed, but almost aristocratically well shaped. Altogether, despite a trim amazingly like that of the rufian of some Adelphi melodrama, the big digger looked strangely like a gentleman, and attracted my observation from the first.

He came lounging up the room, a short black pipe tucked away in the corner of his mouth, his hands stuck carelessly in his broad gold-belt, where the polished butt of his Colt peeped significantly out above the bulging pockets, crammed to bursting with nuggets and dust, and on his head a three-hundred dollar Panama hat, brand-new, and forming a quaint contrast to the rest of his costume. In Frisco, in those days, your Panama hat was the one infallible mark of your dandy. Thence downwards you might get up in any fashion you might think becoming, or find advantageous to your comfort or your purse. So long as you had a first-class Panama hat you were all right.

Our tall friend's Panama was a real beauty, and, for the rest, he certainly had an air of doing as he darned pleased, with as easy a disregard for anything but his own pleasure as you could wish a big,

burly, good-natured man to possess. For that he was a thoroughly good-natured fellow was beyond all question. It was "writ large" all over him. As he took his way calmly through the thickest of the throng, his jovial face and beaming smile seemed to smooth his passage quite as effectually as his big shoulders forced it. He had a word and a jest for everyone, and when anything was said that tickled his risible faculties—not difficult of tickling—the great broad smile would break all over the sunburnt features, and the blue eyes would dance as merrily as any schoolboy's. Yet for all the transparent bonhomie of the man's face there was a strange resolution about it too—it was a face that one could readily fancy growing on good occasion very hard and stern.

"Good bird to pluck," observed a Yankee at my elbow to a friend standing by, jerking his head in the direction of the stranger, and squirting half-a-pint or so of tobacco-juice into the nearest spittoon by way of emphasis to the remark.

The other followed the direction of the speaker's eye, looked at the new-comer carelessly for a moment or two with both eyes open, looked at him for another moment or two intently with one eye half shut, turned a mighty quid in one hollow cheek, added his contribution of tobacco-juice to the common stock, and replied with sententious gravity:

"Bad bird to peck."

Much to my satisfaction, the "bird" in question made his way as, though of set purpose, straight to the table by which I was standing. By this time his pipe was out, and, without removing it from the corner of his mouth, where it seemed as much a fixture as any of his teeth, he took a cake of tobacco from the breast of his red shirt, drew the ivory-handled bowie from its convenient resting-place in the top of his right boot, and began cutting up and rubbing a fresh supply, intently regarding the players the while.

Enchre is a rapid game, or was, as played out West in those days. Tap—tap—tap—tap; four little knuckle-raps upon the table, so closely following upon each other that they might have been given by a single over-zealous postman, and all four players have expressed their determination that clubs, at all events, shall not be the trump suit this deal. Before the dealer—and he is quick enough in his movements, too—has had time to turn the seven of clubs, whose pretensions to govern the

deal have been thus summarily rejected, a brief nasal grunt of "next" has proclaimed the eldest hand's exercise of his privilege in promoting spades to the vacant throne. As he speaks, he plays; as he plays—almost before his card has touched the board—the second follows suit. And so card follows card as swiftly as from the dealer's hands, and the game is over, and the cards swept together again and deftly shuffled—I never saw real artistic shuffling anywhere but in the West; no, not even in Rhineland—cut, dealt, and the game under way again in little more time than a deliberative player at home might take over a single card at whist, even without arousing the impatience of his fellow-sufferers.

Our new friend was evidently a connoisseur in euchre, and as he thrust the ivory bowie back into his boot, and rubbed the rich black shreds round and round in his horny palm, I could see the blue eyes twinkle, and the great wavy masses of hair about the mouth just stirred by the faint suggestion of a smile.

And our friend was right. The "team" before us was a good one, about as good as I have often seen. I rather "fancied myself" at euchre in those days, and could appreciate first-class play when I saw it; but had I been invited to "cut in" among such very "straight, squinting gunners" as these, I shouldn't, in the words of a lamented Yankee friend—afterwards, I regret to say, "spoilt" by Mr. Justice Lynch for playing euchre a little too well—"I shouldn't have thought twice about it. No, sirree! I should ha' clar'd right out, fast time o' asking."

Our new friend was less diffident. As he stuffed the fresh supply into his pipe—without the least thinking it necessary to remove the latter from his mouth for the purpose—I could see that the very fingers thus agreeably employed were itching to be at the good work. Nor was it long before they were gratified. Play was even enough, but the cards had been running crookedly, and, as luck would have it, altogether against the weaker purse. The newly-filled pipe was hardly well alight, before the player nearest to us had "had enough," and retired with his empty gold belt from the contest. His late partner looked up in search of a new ally, caught the eye of my big friend, recognised him as a kindred spirit, and was content.

"In, old hoss?" was the brief question that promptly followed.

"You bet," was the yet briefer answer. And with the fourth puff from the newly-lighted pipe, the cards were in the new-comer's hands, and he had already "ordered-up" a knave of diamonds, with as calm an indifference as though there were naught but "right bowers" in the pack. His partner's eyes sparkled. He did not seem to have the slightest apprehension as to the result, though he himself, as eldest hand, had already "passed" the dangerous card, the absorption of which into the adversary's hand would ensure him at least one certain trick out of the three which would suffice to "euchre" them. The almost imperceptible pause, as of doubt, which he had himself made before administering the negative rap to the table, though enough to signify alike to his partner and to the opponent on his left hand a certain power of support, which must needs to some extent encourage the one and intimidate the other, had not been pronounced enough for any danger of misleading. There was no fear. The new comrade had cards as well as skill, and that sadly diminished little "pile" at his elbow would now begin to swell again.

Which it did. Play and cards combined carried all before them, and before long one of his opponents—a player "for the pot," not for the game—had had enough of it, and had surrendered his place, leaving a considerable portion of his previous winnings behind him. Brownbeard laughed jovially as he went.

"Clean skinned?" he enquired, glancing up at the departing player, as he applied himself to the cutting of a fresh supply of cavendish.

The seceder shook his head, and acknowledged, a trifle gruffly, that he had "a bit o' hide left."

"Wal," replied Brownbeard, "the air's cold outside. Take a bit o' 'intment just to make th' ha'r sprout." And as he spoke he gathered up a goodly handful of gold pieces from the heap beside him, and held them out for his late opponent's acceptance.

The man laughed, shook his head, gave the other a mighty slap on the shoulder, and answered less gruffly than before, though still with quite as much earnest as jest in his tone:

"Reckon we'll meet again 'fore long, old hoss, and then by thunder I'll raise your ha'r, ef it aren't glued on."

"Bully for you!" rejoined the other, tranquilly. "Guess there's more down Bluenose Gully yonder;" and the game

being now re-formed, took up his cards and continued the play.

I watched him a little while longer, and then went away to dinner. After dinner I went to the Jenny Lind Theatre, and on my way home I looked in at the El Dorado again.

Brownbeard was still there and playing away as gaily and as brilliantly as ever. But somehow luck seemed to have changed, and he had evidently been losing considerably. The general aspect of affairs too had somehow altered. Brownbeard's partner was gone, and in his place was another digger "on the burst," very much of the same type. But their two opponents were of an altogether different description. The one on his left hand belonged to the stovepipe fraternity: a narrow-faced, sallow-complexioned man with thin lips, a slightly-hooked nose, hay-coloured hair and goatee, and a pair of keen, green-gray eyes, sunk deep under the brows and set close together. His partner was chiefly noticeable for the extreme newness of his clothes, which somehow, though of orthodox cut enough—red shirt, cord trousers, big boots, Panama and all complete—seemed hardly to sit naturally upon him. His hands too, deft enough with the cards, showed no signs of recent toil. A new arrival, perhaps, freshly rigged out and getting rid of superfluous "lumber" before starting on his first trip up country.

If that, however, had been his object, he had failed in carrying it out. A goodly share of the huge pile I had left before dinner at Brownbeard's side had now drifted across the corner of the table and lay under the sleeve of the bright red shirt. Brownbeard, however, seemed to trouble himself remarkably little about it. Good cards or bad, luck or no luck, let the golden tide flow or ebb as it pleased, he played on with just as much coolness, and, as it seemed, with just as much zest and enjoyment too, under the one condition as under the other. We were not particularly stoical in California in those days. When the game went well with us we laughed aloud and slapped our heavy palm upon the table till the gold pieces danced again. When luck went against us we cursed it freely, in no undertone, and banged the table with our clenched fist, as though to punish it for betraying us. We had many virtues, no doubt, but reticence was not among them. I make no doubt but that, had Brownbeard been so minded, he would have given ex-

pression to his satisfaction or his annoyance with as primitive a disregard of convention as any red-shirt there. But it was very plain that here, for once at all events, was a man who played "for the play." The gold pieces, whose movements to and fro marked its fluctuations, were to him so many counters. As he himself had said, there were plenty more in Bluenose Gully, wherever that might be. When these were gone he would carry his brawny arms back there again, and dig a fresh supply.

It really seemed as though, from the pecuniary point of view, the spectators took more interest in the game than the player himself. Indeed, so keen was the interest evidently felt by some of them that my attention was involuntarily caught by it.

Then I began to realise that the "gallery" was as much changed in constitution as the "team" of players. Where I was standing, indeed, there was much the same little gathering of cleaned-out players, loafers, expectant cutters-in, and so forth, that was to be found around any table where anything exceptional in the way of play was going on. But round the player on Brownbeard's left had congregated a little knot of men who, without any outward sign of recognition, seemed somehow to me to be his friends. One thing at all events was very certain. Their position rendered it next to impossible for anyone else to overlook his hand.

Perhaps it was this fact that gave me a curiosity to see it. I don't think there was then the smallest suspicion in my mind, though when I come to look back upon the play, the singular opportuneness with which the stovepipe gentleman continually overtrumped Brownbeard's best tricks might very well have aroused it in a looker-on. I fancy, however, it was merely the instinctive desire to see what is hidden from other people which led me round behind the little group, which fenced in the black-coated player's chair. I happen to stand something over six feet in height, and could see over the barrier comfortably enough.

I had not been standing there five minutes before my suspicions were unmistakably aroused. Where the card had come from I could not attempt to say, but I could almost have sworn that the "left bower," with which Blackcoat had just knocked over Brownbeard's ace, was not in his hand when it was dealt. A few minutes more and the same thing occurred, though even now I could not be absolutely

certain of my facts; and my curiosity being now thoroughly aroused, I set myself steadily to watch Blackcoat's cards. In four more deals I had made myself sure. The cards dealt to him had been, as I had carefully noted, the ace and nine of clubs, which were trumps, and the king, queen, and seven of diamonds. The ace of trumps had taken Brownbeard's queen, and he had led out the seven of diamonds, which in its turn had fallen to an ace from the eldest hand. Trumps were then again led, and again the opportunity "left bower"—i.e. in this instance, of course, the knave of spades—had beaten the king with which Brownbeard would else have won the trick. There was assuredly no knave of spades among the cards originally dealt to Blackcoat. I glanced down enquiringly at those still remaining in his hand. The queen of diamonds was gone.

What decision I should have come to as to mentioning my discovery I cannot say, for at the same instant my attention was diverted by a little crash upon the table, and turning my eyes I saw that the pipe had fallen suddenly from Brownbeard's tightly-closed mouth. For the moment he did not seem to observe what had happened, and it was someone else's hand which came down upon the little lump of lighted tobacco which was quietly burning a hole in the table. Then he seemed to recover himself, and turning his head with a laugh spat out some pieces of broken clay. He had bitten the end of the pipe clean off.

Had he discovered what was going on? I could not help fancying he had; and though his manner remained unchanged, it seemed to me that, even as he played, he was studying the faces, not of his black-coated opponent only, but of the little knot by whom he was surrounded. Once I found his eyes for a moment resting silently upon my face, and, as he withdrew them, he smiled with what seemed very like an air of satisfaction.

Presently the little occurrence above described took place again; the "right bower" being the one so opportunely produced this time. Again I caught Brownbeard's eye; and now there was an unmistakable question in it. I answered by an almost imperceptible nod, and he smiled again. But a spark flashed out from under the thick brown eyebrows, which recalled to my mind the epigrammatic little conversation of eight or ten hours back. He

had certainly, so far, been a good bird to pluck. Was he now going to show himself an equally bad bird to peck?

"Play, stranger?" he enquired, addressing me across the table as I put this question to myself.

"A little," I answered, somewhat reluctantly, for, truth to tell, I was not too anxious to be mixed up in one of these "difficulties," of which I had hitherto managed to keep clear; and which, at times, involved more promiscuous shooting than was quite good for the health of uninterested bystanders.

"Then just work the cradle for me a bit," he continued; "my legs are cramped, and I'll take a spell for a hand or two."

I objected, with prudent modesty, that I was "not good enough."

"You bet!" he answered, laughingly. "Thar's my pile—what's left of it. You go on that, and pouch half the plunder. You won't slop over the dust much worse than I've been doing, any way—not with yer eyes shut."

And certainly for some time I did not "slop over the dust" at all. On the contrary, Brownbeard's sadly-diminished pile now began by degrees to swell again. Perhaps Blackcoat was alarmed, and, playing on the square, I think I was a match for him. At all events, for the next half hour the balance of success was decidedly on our side; and, during that time, Brownbeard, who had replaced his broken pipe with a cheroot, stood quietly behind me, smoking and watching the game with as much unconcern, as though it had been my own money I had been playing with instead of his. The only difference in his demeanour was that, whereas before he had been almost silent, he now kept up a perfect stream of "chaff."

I saw our two opponents exchange glances and grin at one another. I could not help asking myself whether the bitter beer—at three dollars the bottle!—which had been pouring pretty freely down Brownbeard's throat all the evening might not be producing its effect. Most sincerely did I hope not, especially when, by-and-by, our opponents' confidence seemed to revive; and that opportune "bower" again made its appearance on my left hand. Thrice more it happened without the slightest notice being taken by Brownbeard, who rattled on as merrily as ever, and who had now turned the conversation—if conversation it could be

called, which was almost exclusively kept up by himself—upon conjuring tricks. I was beginning to think that I might as well back quietly out of the affair, when suddenly, just as the cards had been freshly dealt, and the new hand was about to begin, he struck in with:

"Say, lads! Just hold up your hands a bit, till I show you somethin'!"

He spoke so naturally, that even the rascal on my left did not for the moment take the alarm.

"What are you up to now?" he asked, half surlily.

"Wal," answered Brownbeard quietly, "I'll show you. It's a little trick I invented myself when I was snowed up three weeks down to Bluenose yonder, all alone with a pack o' cards and a keg of Bourbon. Look hyar! Clubs are trumps, aren't they?"

"Don't take much conjuring to spot that," replied a bystander jeeringly.

"That's so," rejoined Brownbeard. "And 'tain't thar the trick comes in. Look hyar, now. I'll go five to one with any cuss here present, that not one of you three has got the 'right bower.' My Injun hasn't, any way," and he took the cards from my hand and threw them on the table as he spoke.

There was a silence as the three players looked at one another, but no one answered.

My own eyes were fixed upon Blackcoat, and I could see that, at the ominous words "right bower," a fear came upon him, and he turned sallower than before. His unoccupied hand too, hitherto lying idly on the table, was lifted quickly, and I involuntarily half rose from my chair to be ready to slip aside from the expected shot.

But Brownbeard's eyes were on him, and, if he had really meditated anything of the kind, he abandoned the idea. The hand just rested a moment or two in the bosom of the close-fitting black satin waistcoat, and returned again to its resting-place on the table. I fancied he looked relieved when it had done so. I fancied, too, that I could hear Brownbeard laugh under his breath behind my chair.

"Don't think much o' that for a trick," said the player in the brand-new suit, who also had been evidently uneasy, and appeared now considerably relieved.

"Perhaps I'll better it," replied Brownbeard, leaning over my shoulder, and quietly spreading out the remaining cards,

faces downwards, with his left hand, but without taking his eyes off the man in the black coat. "See, now! Right bower's somewhar hereabouts, I guess—or should be. I'll go ten to one—in slugs—with any cuss hyar present, that I plug a hole slick through it, whar it lays—fust shot."

There was a profounder silence than before. Everyone seemed now to understand that there was something wrong. The man in black turned livid, and half rose from his chair.

But it was too late! Even as he moved, there was a sudden flash, a sharp report just at my ear, and with one stifled cry the man threw up his arms, and fell forward on the table—dead.

In an instant, a dozen repeaters had leaped from their lurking-places, and were pointed menacingly towards us. But Brownbeard never flinched. Throwing upon the table the yet smoking pistol, with five of its six chambers still loaded, he folded his arms and stood quietly facing the excited throng unarmed.

"No hurry, boys," he said in a clear, firm voice; "no hurry. Ef I've done more'n I said, thar's plenty o' room here to fix a rope. Jest turn that carrion over, will you?"

The little knot of confederates around the dead man's seat had disappeared, but a couple of diggers raised the body by the shoulders, and laid it back against the rail of the chair. Then, at a word from the quiet figure still standing with folded arms at my side, one of them thrust his hand into the bosom of the satin waistcoat, and drew forth a card, soaked with blood, and with a small hole through one corner, but still distinguishable. It was the knave of clubs—the missing "right bower"—and the avenging bullet had, in truth, "plugged a hole through it," on its way to the dead swindler's heart!

There was no need for further enquiry. The threatening repeaters went back to their hiding-places again. Not one among them but would have been used promptly enough to the same end. In less than ten minutes, all trace of the affray was removed, and the play was in full swing again. Neither Brownbeard or I, however, felt inclined for more that evening, and we strolled homewards together. Next "fall" I spent a month with him, partly at his hut in Bluenose Gully, partly "b'ar-hunting" among the wild country, some fifty miles farther up towards the mountains. And a glorious fellow I found him.

He was not much of a correspondent, however, as you may suppose, and I have never heard of or seen him since. But I shall not soon forget his Californian conjuring trick.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER II. AT HOME.

CELIA'S coming home, however, was an old story now—years old. She was once more a Deepweald limpet, with merely the brand of the Continent to distinguish her from her fellows. She needed some sort of distinction; for, with a strange but far from peculiar form of perversity, the people of Deepweald, such as the Swanns and others, resolutely refused to see any change in Celia, unless it might be a little for the worse. She had always been awkward, shy, and plain; so she was bound to be awkward, shy, and plain all her days. But of course having been on the Continent gave her a *raison d'être*, and her fellow-townpeople were the less inclined to grudge it to her in that she had no other, and was brought into rivalry with nobody.

But though this gave her a badge of distinction in the place which she, by force of early habit, regarded—always next to Lindenheim—as the capital of the world, the sky-rocket of the conservatorium, for such she had become, had come down like a stick most lamentably. And she seemed likely to be stuck like a real limpet in Deepweald until that deaf fanatic, her father, had finished the last chord of his score. And when would that be? He had been at it for something like twenty years; and he still talked of a few years more. And until those few years more were over to the last hour, and the final chord ready for action, the voice of Celia was to be kept out of sight like a buried treasure over which, in legendary times, dragons were set to keep guard. She was not even to let herself be heard as a singing mistress—not even in Deepweald, where one must be heard sing very loudly to be heard of half-a-dozen miles away.

Was it genius in the organist, or was it lunacy? Celia, as a child, had looked on her father as the very incarnation of music; but Lindenheim had considerably

modified her views; she knew not what to believe. Public opinion was more decided. John March had never been worth a halfpenny an hour as a teacher, and, in point of fact, his deafness did not make a farthing's difference in his value; but nevertheless an overtly deaf music-master was a contradiction in terms, and Celia had not been at home a day before she found that the very small salary of the cathedral organist was all that the two together had to depend upon for a living. It was true that John March as yet had no professional rival in the place, but it was equally true that all his pupils had left him, and that a rival might be looked for any day in the natural course of things. And then the organist's pittance, however highly he might be thought of by the Palace and the Deanery, was precarious, as it became manifest that his deafness was past cure.

Surely it was time that Celia, fired with new-born filial pity for that fallen tyrant, to whom she was really more closely bound by unconscious sympathy than by emotional affection; surely it was time that she should turn her education to some use, and, if he would not allow her to defy fortune as a concert singer, become herself his friendly rival. The same idea occurred to Mrs. Swann, who called on her within two days of her return, and volunteered to start her effectively. But to every such suggestion the organist turned, both metaphorically and literally, two deaf ears. He never gave a reason to anybody but Celia; and so obstinate was he that the few, who wished to be his friends, set down his conduct as sheer lunacy, and the score as a monomania. And, rightly or wrongly, most people of the most ordinary common sense would naturally come to the same conclusion.

"It's odd," was Mr. Swann's expressed opinion, "that a clever fellow like March should let that poor girl of his starve rather than let her go governessing. That isn't pride, to my mind. It isn't pride, when the wolf comes to the door, to ask him to dinner. It's a case for two doctors and the county asylum, to my mind. Poor Celia, I always had a sort of a kindness for that girl! What's to become of them when March loses his place, I'm hanged if I know. I wish we could do something for them; I'd give her a stool in my own office, if she was a boy."

"I might give her that old polonaise

thing of Bessy's," said Mrs. Swann meditatively. "But then she does pitchfork her things on so."

"Does she? I thought she looked quite neat and nice when I saw her to-day."

"Yes, that's how men see things. She was always like that—pitchforked on, I mean. It's bred in the bone. However, we'll have her to dinner on Sundays, and welcome."

"A growing girl wants more dinners than one a week," said Mr. Swann. "However, half a loaf's better than no bread."

But, though Celia was asked to dinner on Sunday—without her father—and though the invitation was twice repeated, she did not go. She was beginning, after the first shock, to think; and a girl, fresh from life, and triumph, and Lindenheim, may be acquitted of unfilial unselfishness for shuddering, when she thought, at the desert of life that lay before her. Even she, though she did not breathe such treason even to herself, was ceasing to believe in the completion of that interminable score. She had learned what the faculty of composing means, and how the greatest works have not demanded lifetimes. And yet she did not practically feel that he was the victim to an insane delusion. And so her life lay plain before her—to sacrifice herself to a dream, because it was all that her father had left to live for; to obey him, because his terrible misfortune exacted self-devotion more legitimately than his tyranny had done; and to give him a little of the human affection, that for the sake of a dream he had thrown away.

But obedience implied being idle, and the patient waiting for an end that was never to come. Happily for her, she had not one atom of ambition in her whole composition—or unhappily, because, if she had, she would have been driven into wholesome rebellion, and have refused to sacrifice her life for a craze, or, at best, a whim. But at last, as time went on, and when the last pupil left, a greater incentive arose to active rebellion even than healthy ambition. The wolf was at the door. John March had not learned business in Deepweald cathedral, nor had Celia studied domestic economy at Lindenheim.

And so it happened that, for old friendship's sake, she consented to give instruction to Bessy Gaveston. She told her father, but could never make out whether he understood it or no, or whether he made use of his deafness as a means of compromise between yielding at last to

the supposed necessity of supporting what he monstrously called life, and his determination to give no express consent to a breach of the law that he had made. At any rate he would not understand; and Celia was obliged to take silence for assent, for lack of any other. No doubt the organist argued, If my score needs the sacrifice even of my will, let even my will go.

It was in this melancholy condition of home affairs that Celia so unexpectedly met, even in the High-street of Deepweald, where a stranger was a ten days' wonder, Walter Gordon.

However much she had fallen into the background of his mind, he was as freshly in the foreground of hers as after the walk to Waaren. She believed in the eternity of friendship, even though educated at Lindenheim, where loves and friendships are as the lives of butterflies—no less brief as no less bright and many-coloured. Was he not the only real man she had ever really known? For she had been faithful at Lindenheim to her pledge, the young men of Deepweald did not count, and her father was only an incarnate organ-pipe transformed into an incarnate score. He had given her life; and if anything more that he had given her was as yet but a mere thin phantom, those thin phantoms are notoriously strong. Seeing her thus suddenly and unexpectedly had brought back all Lindenheim even to him. But to her? No wonder that for full five minutes the English sun began to shine in German, and the perfume of old days blew back. All old days have their special fragrance, and with Celia they were violet-odoured. Once more she was the shy and awkward new girl walking beside a magnificent stranger across the borders of a new world—a world where that Moloch, art itself, was nowhere.

She had dismissed him, with almost needless lack of encouragement; but she could not help wondering whether something more than mere chance had not brought him to Deepweald, and, if so, how long the chain of chances was to be, or whether it was to end barrenly where it had begun. She felt troubled and excited—but the trouble was no pain. Was it Herr Walter's mission always to turn up, at all sorts of sudden times and places, when she most needed him? If so, life would not look quite so barren and unsympathetic after all. On the contrary, there would be many an oasis in the desert for her.

But she looked for nothing immediate or tangible. And she had no presentiment, even when the girl, with her wages in arrear, announced a gentleman, name unknown, to see Miss March. She assumed it would be Mr. Gaveston, and her heart gave a leap when she thought of a possible cheque. It was Herr Walter. She had given him to understand that he was not to call, but his disobedience did not displease her. What could be more natural that he should call on his most intimate Lindenheim friend?

"I suppose you were hardly expecting to see me here, Fräulein Celia? But you see, where you are is Lindenheim."

Celia smiled and sighed. She liked the speech; but she was only too sure that where she was, was not Lindenheim.

"I'm staying at Hinchford—Lord Quorne's—and I've been waiting for a chance of coming over again. We're friends, aren't we?"

"I hope so," said Celia.

"Then let's make believe we are at Lindenheim. You used to tell me everything there, you know, and I used to tell you everything—or any way, most things. I don't think I used to tell you every time I went to the Stadt Dresden, or how much beer I used to drink there. Well, we're wiser now. I want to know if you are really settled down to teaching in Deepweald? I think I might be of use to you with Lady Quorne."

He began to find her really very lovely to look at, and not only from a painter's point of view—which, however, was not then so opposed to general notions of beauty, as it has since become. He was not a Deepweald man, and therefore not bound to believe that all people are branded at ten years old with an ineffaceable label.

"I teach Mrs. Gaveston," she said.

"Nobody else? Do you know, I can't imagine your settling down here. It's the old business of the racer and the dust-cart. I suppose you mean to go into the profession some day?"

"No," said Celia, beginning to feel that it was less easy to give Herr Walter her whole confidence now than it had been at Lindenheim. "At least—at least, not for a long time."

"A long time? Why should the world have to wait so long for the Lindenheim Nightingale—the Nightingale aus England, you used to be called there?" He added the postscript because he felt that somehow he had made a mistake in paying her a conventional compliment, and the refer-

ence to the Lindenheim phrase turned the edge; he was certainly learning a little truth about womankind and its ways from his elaborate studies of Mademoiselle Clari—at any rate he had reached the second letter of the alphabet, which is—never pay compliments except in war.

"Perhaps never," said Celia, without the sign of a sigh.

"But there is a perhaps, you see."

"Yes—I did tell you everything at Lindenheim. My father wants me to appear in his great work. I must wait till that is done."

"Well, that sounds all right. Why do you say 'perhaps never?'"

"I mean—I mean—well, it is a long time since we were at Lindenheim."

"You call it long ago—yesterday?"

They were following very divergent trains of feeling; and they were landing in the wrong places, for in truth it was to her that Lindenheim was of yesterday, to Walter that it was long ago. But then she was feeling an instinct of reticence about all things, unconsciously aware that Mr. Gordon had ceased to be quite the same Herr Walter, and that she had certain instincts of hero-worship to hide; he felt that however she had changed, she was still the very same Celia, and was making him melt back into the Herr Walter that she was feeling he had ceased to be.

"I'm afraid I haven't done my duty in looking after you, Fräulein Celia," he said, with the real smile aus Lindenheim. "I remember all about your father, and," he added without the smile, "I have heard. Don't you know how I sympathise with you—how I want to help you—if I may? Why else did you think I had come?" He held out his hand; she took it frankly. They never knew from that moment how far apart they had been within two moments ago.

"Then you know why I am here," said Celia.

"Well—no. That's just what I don't know. With your gifts you could make a living for both of you—you might make a fortune."

"You don't know my father. He would see me in my grave rather than enter on a career—except in one way. And then—I'm afraid you don't know me. I might teach a little—but—no: I should never sing in public. I'm——"

"What?"

"A coward, Herr Walter. I nearly sank under the floor when I sang at Lindenheim."

"Ah! before friends and enemies? But you'd be bold enough before strangers?"

"No; that's just what I shouldn't be. That's why I'm content to wait for years. I want to learn to be brave."

"By not going into the water till you've learned to swim. But do you mean your father's work is not to be finished for years?"

"He says so."

"But what can it be, in the name of immensity? An opera? An oratorio?"

"I don't know. He doesn't even tell me. He locks it up, and calls it the score."

Walter's face fell. The genius had impressed a man the more, and of a different order from the Swanns, with an idea of his lunacy.

"And you—you," he said, his eagerness waking up at the thought of a real piece of injustice, "you are devoting your life to humour—to help—the craze—the idea——"

"Of my father," said Celia, simply, "who is deaf, and is growing old, and has nobody to believe in him but me."

Walter flushed more crimson than Celia at Waaren.

"I see," he said. "But, all the same, it is a shame. He is sacrificing you and robbing the world. Celia—it never will be finished, that score. I remember, you told me the first day I ever saw you—you remember?—that even then he had been at it for years. Such works last men their lives, and are never born even at the end."

Celia's face was not given to express obstinacy. But it did now; and it was answer enough, without her saying:

"It shall not fail for any fault of mine. He lives for this work, and has made me live for it too. I must not break his heart, Herr Walter."

Walter did not say, "I should like to break his head," he only thought so. He felt very angry. It is true Celia had been practically out of his thoughts for years; but here was a new experience of her, and he knew not which was the stronger cause for righteous indignation, the culpable lunacy of a self-conceited organist, or the obstinate determination on the part of Celia to sacrifice herself on such an altar. After all, had he not constituted himself Celia's guardian? And now was he not bound to be? What were the tiny perils of Lindenheim to those of Deepweald?

They did not speak another word for more than a minute—that is to say, for

what seemed five. Celia was stubbornly feeling; Walter was thinking. And he saw the life that must lie before her as plainly as she could picture it, and with greater effect, for he did not see the infinite pity that lay at the root of her devotion, and made it the less bitter. He only saw the blank barrenness. He had never yet seen the organist; but he painted him in the air as an exaggerated development of the Genius—genius as recognised at Lindenheim—only petrified by provinciality and age. Celia, he was convinced, only wanted ambition and self-assertion to gain name and fame—unless, indeed, she married, and then, of course, Walter would be relieved of his duty. And, in his new impulse of rebellion against injustice, he did not wish to be relieved.

Suddenly he heard a deep voice—"Celia!"

The organist's voice had grown rather harsher of late years. But it was still resonant with its effect of narrow power. Walter almost started. John March at the same time saw a stranger, and stared. Walter did not openly stare, though Celia's father resembled little enough the picture he had drawn.

"Neither genius nor madman," he thought. "A fanatic—that is worst of all. Poor girl!"

The organist carried no trumpet. Celia wrote something for him in pencil on a slip of paper.

"Walter Gordon!" he exclaimed brusquely; "Walter Gordon!"

Walter bowed. "And a deaf fanatic," he thought. "One who is shut up alone with a dream! Poor girl! She must be saved from this, anyhow."

Celia looked at him slightly but openly, as much as to say, "Go." He wished to remain, but all the chivalry in him was aroused, and he obeyed. He was twenty years old again. He had never expected to find in Celia a slave because she was a heroine. And somehow the father had thrown light upon the daughter—he was throwing himself after an idea, and she seemed capable of doing the same. His knowledge of womankind was beginning to be at sea with a vengeance; what with Clari's suggestions of unexplored depths of passion, and Celia's of unsuspected force of will, he seemed to have been fancying himself sliding on smooth ice, and to have just discovered it to be hot lava.

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER III. LIFE AT MANOR CROSS.

THE married couple passed their honeymoon in Ireland, Lady Brotherton having a brother, an Irish peer, who lent them for a few months his house on the Blackwater. The marriage, of course, was celebrated in the cathedral, and equally of course the officiating clergymen were the dean and Canon Holdenough. On the day before the marriage, Lord George was astonished to find how rich a man was his father-in-law.

"Mary's fortune is her own," he said; "but I should like to give her something. Perhaps I had better give it to you on her behalf."

Then he shuffled a cheque for a thousand pounds into Lord George's hands. He moreover gave his daughter a hundred pounds in notes on the morning of the wedding, and thus acted the part of the benevolent father and father-in-law to a miracle. It may be acknowledged here that the receipt of the money removed a heavy weight from Lord George's heart. He was himself so poor, and at the same time so scrupulous, that he had lacked funds sufficient for the usual brightness of a wedding tour. He would not take his mother's money, nor lessen his own small patrimony; but now it seemed that wealth was showered on him from the Deanery.

Perhaps a sojourn in Ireland did as well as anything could towards assisting the young wife in her object of falling in love with her husband. He would hardly

have been a sympathetic companion in Switzerland or Italy, as he did not care for lakes or mountains. But Ireland was new to him and new to her, and he was glad to have an opportunity of seeing something of a people as to whom so little is really known in England. And at Ballycondra, on the Blackwater, they were justified in feeling a certain interest in the welfare of the tenants around them. There was something to be done, and something of which they could talk. Lord George, who couldn't hunt, and wouldn't dance, and didn't care for mountains, could enquire with some zeal how much wages a peasant might earn, and what he would do with it when earned. It interested him to learn that whereas an English labourer will certainly eat and drink his wages from week to week—so that he could not be trusted to pay any sum half-yearly—an Irish peasant, though he be half starving, will save his money for the rent. And Mary, at his instance, also cared for these things. It was her gift, as with many women, to be able to care for everything. It was, perhaps, her misfortune that she was apt to care too much for many things. The honeymoon in Ireland answered its purpose, and Lady George, when she came back to Manor Cross, almost thought that she had succeeded. She was at any rate able to assure her father that she had been as happy as the day was long, and that he was absolutely—"perfect."

This assurance of perfection the dean no doubt took at its proper value. He patted his daughter's cheek as she made it, and kissed her, and told her that he did not doubt but with a little care she might make herself a happy woman. The

house in town had already been taken under his auspices, but of course was not to be inhabited yet.

It was very small, but a very pretty little house, in a quaint little street called Munster-court, near Storey's-gate, with a couple of windows looking into St. James's-park. It was now September, and London, for the present, was out of the question. Indeed, it had been arranged that Lord George and his wife should remain at Manor Cross till after Christmas. But the house had to be furnished, and the dean evinced his full understanding of the duties of a father-in-law in such an emergency. This, indeed, was so much the case that Lord George became a little uneasy. He had the greater part of the thousand pounds left, which he insisted on expending—and thought that that should have sufficed. But the dean explained, in his most cordial manner—and no man's manner could be more cordial than the dean's—that Mary's fortune from Mr. Tallowax had been unexpected, that having had but one child he intended to do well by her, and that, therefore, he could now assist in starting her well in life without doing himself a damage. The house in this way was decorated and furnished, and sundry journeys to London served to brighten the autumn, which might otherwise have been dull and tedious.

At this period of her life two things together, and both acting in opposition to her anticipations of life, surprised the young bride not a little. The one was her father's manner of conversation with her, and the other was her husband's. The dean had never been a stern parent; but he had been a clergyman, and as a clergyman he had inculcated a certain strictness of life—a very modified strictness, indeed, but something more rigid than might have come from him had he been a lawyer or a country gentleman. Mary had learned that he wished her to attend the cathedral services, and to interest herself respecting them, and she had always done so. He had explained to her that, although he kept a horse for her to ride, he, as the Dean of Brotherton, did not wish her to be seen in the hunting-field. In her dress, her ornaments, her books, her parties, there had been always something to mark slightly her clerical belongings. She had never chafed against this, because she loved her father and was naturally obedient; but she had felt something perhaps of a soft regret. Now her

ather, whom she saw very frequently, never spoke to her of any duties. How should her house be furnished? In what way would she lay herself out for London society? What enjoyments of life could she best secure? These seemed to be matters on which he was most intent. It occurred to her that, when speaking to her of the house in London, he never once asked her what church she would attend; and that when she spoke with pleasure of being so near the Abbey, he paid little or no attention to her remark. And then, too, she felt, rather than perceived, that in his counsels to her he almost intimated that she must have a plan of life different from her husband's. There were no such instructions given, but it almost seemed as though this were implied. He took it for granted that her life was to be gay and bright, though he seemed to take it also for granted that Lord George did not wish to be gay and bright.

All this surprised her. But it did not, perhaps, surprise her so much as the serious view of life which her husband from day to day impressed upon her. That hero of her early dreams, that man with the light hair and the dimpled chin, whom she had not as yet quite forgotten, had never scolded her, had never spoken a serious word to her, and had always been ready to provide her with amusements that never palled. But Lord George made out a course of reading for her—so much for the two hours after breakfast, so much for the hour before dressing—so much for the evening; and also a table of results to be acquired in three months—in six months—and so much by the close of the first year; and even laid down the sum total of achievements to be produced by a dozen years of such work! Of course she determined to do as he would have her do. The great object of her life was to love him; and, of course, if she really loved him, she would comply with his wishes. She began her daily hour of Gibbon, after breakfast, with great zeal. But there was present to her an idea, that if the Gibbon had come from her father, and the instigations to amuse herself from her husband, it would have been better.

These things surprised her; but there was another matter that vexed her. Before she had been six weeks at Manor Cross she found that the ladies set themselves up as her tutors. It was not the marchioness who offended her so much as her three

sisters-in-law. The one of the family whom she had always liked best had been also liked best by Mr. Holdenough, and had gone to live next door to her father in the Close. Lady Alice, though perhaps a little tiresome, was always gentle and good-natured. Her mother-in-law was too much in awe of her own eldest daughter ever to scold anyone. But Lady Sarah could be very severe; and Lady Susanna could be very stiff; and Lady Amelia always echoed what her elder sisters said.

Lady Sarah was by far the worst. She was forty years old, and looked as though she were fifty, and wished to be thought sixty. That she was, in truth, very good, no one either at Manor Cross or in Brotherton or in any other of the parishes around ever doubted. She knew every poor woman on the estate, and had a finger in the making of almost every petticoat worn. She spent next to nothing on herself, giving away almost all her own little income. She went to church whatever was the weather. She was never idle and never wanted to be amused. The place in the carriage which would naturally have been hers, she had always surrendered to one of her sisters, when there had been five ladies at Manor Cross, and now she surrendered again to her brother's wife. She spent hours daily in the parish school. She was doctor and surgeon to the poor people—never sparing herself. But she was harsh-looking, had a harsh voice, and was dictatorial. The poor people had become used to her, and liked her ways. The women knew that her stitches never gave way, and the men had a wholesome confidence in her medicines, her plasters, and her cookery. But Lady George Germain did not see by what right she was to be made subject to her sister-in-law's jurisdiction.

Church matters did not go quite on all-fours at Manor Cross. The ladies, as has before been said, were all high, the marchioness being the least exigent in that particular, and Lady Amelia the most so. Ritual, indeed, was the one point of interest in Lady Amelia's life. Among them there was assent enough for daily comfort; but Lord George was in this respect, and in this respect only, a trouble to them. He never declared himself openly, but it seemed to them that he did not care much about church at all. He would generally go of a Sunday morning; but there was a conviction that he did so chiefly to oblige his mother. Nothing was ever said of this.

There was probably present to the ladies some feeling, not uncommon, that religion is not so necessary for men as for women. But Lady George was a woman.

And Lady George was also the daughter of a clergyman. There was now a double connection between Manor Cross and the Close at Brotherton. Mr. Canon Holdenough, who was an older man than the dean, and had been longer known in the diocese, was a most unexceptional clergyman, rather high, leaning towards the high and dry, very dignified, and quite as big a man in Brotherton as the dean himself. The dean was, indeed, the dean; but Mr. Holdenough was uncle to a baronet, and the Holdenoughs had been Holdenoughs when the Conqueror came. And then he also had a private income of his own. Now all this gave to the ladies at Manor Cross a peculiar right to be great in church matters—so that Lady Sarah was able to speak with much authority to Mary when she found that the bride, though a dean's daughter, would only go to two services a week, and would shirk one of them if the weather gave the slightest colouring of excuse.

"You used to like the cathedral services," Lady Sarah said to her, one day, when Mary had declined to go to the parish church, to sing the praises of St. Processus.

"That was because they were cathedral services," said Mary.

"You mean to say that you attended the House of God because the music was good!" Mary had not thought the subject over sufficiently to be enabled to say that good music is supplied with the object of drawing large congregations, so she only shrugged her shoulders. "I, too, like good music, dear; but I do not think the want of it should keep me from church." Mary again shrugged her shoulders, remembering, as she did so, that her sister-in-law did not know one tune from another. Lady Alice was the only one of the family who had ever studied music.

"Even your papa goes on Saints' days," continued Lady Sarah, conveying a sneer against the dean by that word "even."

"Papa is dean. I suppose he has to go."

"He would not go to church, I suppose, unless he approved of going."

The subject then dropped. Lady George had not yet arrived at that sort of snarling home intimacy, which would have justified her in telling Lady Sarah that if she

wanted a lesson at all, she would prefer to take it from her husband.

The poor women's petticoats were another source of trouble. Before the autumn was over—by the end of October—when Mary had been two months at Manor Cross, she had been got to acknowledge that ladies living in the country should employ a part of their time in making clothes for the poor people; and she very soon learned to regret the acknowledgment. She was quickly driven into a corner by an assertion from Lady Sarah that, such being the case, the time to be so employed should be defined. She had intended to make something—perhaps an entire petticoat—at some future time. But Lady Sarah was not going to put up with conduct such as that. Mary had acknowledged her duty. Did she mean to perform it, or to neglect it? She made one petticoat, and then gently appealed to her husband. Did not he think that petticoats could be bought cheaper than they could be made? He figured it out, and found that his wife could earn three-halfpence a day by two hours' work; and even Lady Sarah did not require from her more than two hours daily. Was it worth while that she should be made miserable for ninepence a week—less than two pounds a year? Lady George figured it out also, and offered the exact sum, one pound nineteen shillings, to Lady Sarah, in order that she might be let off for the first twelve months. Then Lady Sarah was full of wrath. Was that the spirit in which offerings were to be made to the Lord? Mary was asked, with stern indignation, whether in bestowing the work of her hands upon the people, whether in the very fact that she was doing for the poor that which was distasteful to herself, she did not recognise the performance of a duty? Mary considered awhile, and then said that she thought a petticoat was a petticoat, and that perhaps the one made by the regular petticoat-maker would be the best. She did not allude to the grand doctrine of the division of labour, nor did she hint that she might be doing more harm than good by interfering with regular trade, because she had not studied those matters. But that was the line of her argument. Lady Sarah told her that her heart in that matter was as hard as a nether millstone. The young wife, not liking this, withdrew; and again appealed to her husband. His mind was divided

on the subject. He was clearly of opinion that the petticoat should be obtained in the cheapest market, but he doubted much about the three-halfpence in two hours. It might be that his wife could not do better at present; but experience would come, and in that case, she would be obtaining experience as well as earning three-halfpence. And, moreover, petticoats made at Manor Cross would, he thought, undoubtedly be better than any that could be bought. He came, however, to no final decision; and Mary, finding herself every morning sitting in a great petticoat conclave, hardly had an alternative but to join it.

It was not in any spirit of complaint that she spoke on the subject to her father as the winter came on. A certain old Miss Tallowax had come to the Deanery, and it had been thought proper that Lady George should spend a day or two there. Miss Tallowax, also, had money of her own, and even still owned a share in the business; and the dean had pointed out, both to Lord George and his wife, that it would be well that they should be civil to her. Lord George was to come on the last day, and dine and sleep at the Deanery. On this occasion, when the dean and his daughter were alone together, she said something in a playful way about the great petticoat contest.

"Don't you let those old ladies sit upon you," said the dean. He smiled as he spoke, but his daughter well knew, from his tone, that he meant his advice to be taken seriously.

"Of course, papa, I should like to accommodate myself to them as much as I can."

"But you can't, my dear. Your manner of life can't be their manner, nor theirs yours. I should have thought George would see that."

"He didn't take their part, you know."

"Of course he didn't. As a married woman you are entitled to have your own way, unless he should wish it otherwise. I don't want to make this matter serious; but if it is pressed, tell them that you do not care to spend your time in that way. They cling to old fashions. That is natural enough; but it is absurd to suppose that they should make you as old-fashioned as themselves."

He had taken the matter up quite seriously, and had given his daughter advice evidently with the intention that she should profit by it. That which he

had said as to her being a married woman struck her forcibly. No doubt these ladies at Manor Cross were her superiors in birth; but she was their brother's wife, and, as a married woman, had rights of her own. A little spirit of rebellion already began to kindle itself within her bosom; but in it there was nothing of mutiny against her husband. If he were to desire her to make petticoats all day, of course she would make them; but in this contest he had been, as it were, neutral, and had certainly given her no orders. She thought a good deal about it while at the Deanery, and made up her mind that she would sit in the petticoat conclave no longer. It could not be her duty to pass her time in an employment in which a poor woman might with difficulty earn sixpence a day. Surely she might do better with her time than that, even though she should spend it all in reading Gibbon.

CHAPTER IV. AT THE DEANERY.

THERE was a dinner-party at the Deanery during Miss Tallowax's sojourn at Brotherton. Mr. Canon Holdenough and Lady Alice were there. The bishop and his wife had been asked—a ceremony which was gone through once a year—but had been debarred from accepting the invitation by the presence of clerical guests at the Palace. But his lordship's chaplain, Mr. Groschut, was present. Mr. Groschut also held an honorary prebendal stall, and was one of the chapter—a thorn sometimes in the dean's side. But appearances were well kept up at Brotherton, and no one was more anxious that things should be done in a seemly way than the dean. Therefore, Mr. Groschut, who was a very low churchman, and had once been a Jew, but who bore a very high character for theological erudition, was asked to the Deanery. There was also one or two other clergymen there, with their wives, and Mr. and Mrs. Houghton. Mrs. Houghton, it will be remembered, was the beautiful woman who had refused to become the wife of Lord George Germain. Before taking this step, the dean had been careful to learn whether his son-in-law would object to meet the Houghtons. Such objection would have been foolish, as the families had all known each other. Both Mr. De Baron, Mrs. Houghton's father, and Mr. Houghton himself, had been intimate with the late Marquis, and had been friends of the present lord before he had quitted the country. A lady

when she refuses a gentleman gives no cause of quarrel. All this the dean understood; and as he himself had known both Mr. Houghton and Mr. De Baron ever since he came to Brotherton, he thought it better that there should be such a meeting. Lord George blushed up to the roots of his hair, and then said that he should be very glad to meet the gentleman and his wife.

The two young brides had known each other as girls, and now met with, at any rate, an appearance of friendship.

"My dear," said Mrs. Houghton, who was about four years the elder, "of course I know all about it, and so do you. You are an heiress, and could afford to please yourself. I had nothing of my own, and should have had to pass all my time at Manor Cross. Are you surprised?"

"Why should I be surprised?" said Lady George, who was, however, very much surprised at this address.

"Well, you know, he is the handsomest man in England. Everybody allows that; and, then, such a family—and such possibilities! I was very much flattered. Of course he had not seen you then, or only seen you as a child, or I shouldn't have had a chance. It is a great deal better as it is—isn't it?"

"I think so, certainly."

"I am so glad to hear that you have a house in town. We go up about the 1st of April, when the hunting is over. Mr. Houghton does not ride much, but he hunts a great deal. We live in Berkeley-square, you know; and I do so hope we shall see ever so much of you."

"I'm sure I hope so too," said Lady George, who had never, hitherto, been very fond of Miss De Baron, and had entertained a vague idea that she ought to be a little afraid of Mrs. Houghton. But when her father's guest was so civil to her she did not know how to be other than civil in return.

"There is no reason why what has passed should make any awkwardness—is there?"

"No," said Lady George, feeling that she almost blushed at the allusion to so delicate a subject.

"Of course not. Why should there? Lord George will soon get used to me, just as if nothing had happened; and I shall always be ever so fond of him—in a way, you know. There shall be nothing to make you jealous."

"I'm not a bit afraid of that," said Lady George, almost too earnestly.

"You need not be, I'm sure. Not but what I do think he was at one time very—very much attached to me. But it couldn't be. And what's the good of thinking of such a thing when it can't be? I don't pretend to be very virtuous, and I like money. Now Mr. Houghton, at any rate, has got a large income. If I had had your fortune at my own command, I don't say what I might not have done."

Lady George almost felt that she ought to be offended by all this—almost felt that she was disgusted; but, at the same time, she did not quite understand it. Her father had made a point of asking the Houghtons, and had told her that of course she would know the Houghtons up in town. She had an idea that she was very ignorant of the ways of life; but that now it would behove her, as a married woman, to learn those ways. Perhaps the free-and-easy mode of talking was the right thing. She did not like being told by another lady that that other lady would have married her own husband, only that he was a pauper; and the offence of all this seemed to be the greater because it was all so recent. She didn't like being told that she was not to be jealous, especially when she remembered that her husband had been desperately in love with the lady who told her so not many months ago. But she was not jealous, and was quite sure she never would be jealous; and, perhaps, it did not matter. All this had occurred in the drawing-room before dinner. Then Mr. Houghton came up to her, telling her that he had been commissioned by the dean to have the honour of taking her down to dinner. Having made his little speech, Mr. Houghton retired—as gentlemen generally do retire when in that position.

"Be as nice as you can to him," said Mrs. Houghton. "He hasn't much to say for himself, but he isn't half a bad fellow; and a pretty woman like you can do what she likes with him."

Lady George, as she went down to dinner, assured herself that she had no slightest wish to take any unfair advantage of Mr. Houghton.

Lord George had taken down Miss Tallowax, the dean having been very wise in this matter; and Miss Tallowax was in a seventh heaven of happiness. Miss Tallowax, though she had made no

promises, was quite prepared to do great things for her noble connections, if her noble connections would treat her properly. She had already made half-a-dozen wills, and was quite ready to make another if Lord George would be civil to her. The dean was in his heart a little ashamed of his aunt; but he was man enough to be able to bear her eccentricities without showing his vexation, and sufficiently wise to know that more was to be won than lost by the relationship.

"The best woman in the world," he had said to Lord George beforehand, speaking of his aunt; "but, of course, you will remember that she was not brought up as a lady."

Lord George, with stately urbanity, had signified his intention of treating Miss Tallowax with every consideration.

"She has thirty thousand pounds at her own disposal," continued the dean. "I have never said a word to her about money, but, upon my honour, I think she likes Mary better than anyone else. It's worth bearing in mind, you know."

Lord George smiled again in a stately manner—perhaps showing something of displeasure in his smile. But nevertheless he was well aware that it was worth his while to bear Miss Tallowax and her money in his mind.

"My lord," said Miss Tallowax, "I hope you will allow me to say how much honoured we all feel by Mary's proud position." Lord George bowed and smiled, and led the lady into the Deanery dining-room. Words did not come easily to him, and he hardly knew how to answer the lady. "Of course, it's a great thing for people such as us," continued Miss Tallowax, "to be connected with the family of a marquis." Again Lord George bowed. This was very bad indeed—a great deal worse than he had anticipated from the aunt of so courtly a man as his father-in-law, the dean. The lady looked to be about sixty, very small, very healthy, with streaky red cheeks, small gray eyes, and a brown front. Then came upon him an idea, that it would be a very long time before the thirty thousand pounds, or any part of it, would come to him. And then there came to him another idea, that as he had married the dean's daughter, it was his duty to behave well to the dean's aunt, even though the money should never come to him. He therefore told Miss Tallowax that his mother hoped to have the pleasure of seeing her at Manor

Cross before she left Brotherton. Miss Tallowax almost got out of her seat, as she curtsied with her head and shoulders to this proposition.

The dean was a very good man at the head of his own dinner-table, and the party went off pleasantly, in spite of sundry attempts at clerical pugnacity, made by Mr. Groschut. Every man and every beast has his own weapon. The wolf fights with his tooth, the bull with his horn, and Mr. Groschut always fought with his bishop—so taught by inner instinct. The bishop, according to Mr. Groschut, was inclined to think that this and that might be done. That such a change might be advantageously made in reference to certain clerical meetings; and that the hilarity of the diocese might be enhanced by certain evangelical festivities. These remarks were generally addressed to Mr. Canon Holdenough, who made almost no reply to them. But the dean was on each occasion prepared with some civil answer, which, while it was an answer, would still seem to change the conversation. It was a law in the Close that Bishop Barton should be never allowed to interfere with the affairs of Brotherton cathedral; and if not the bishop, certainly not the bishop's chaplain. Though the canon and the dean did not go altogether on all-fours in reference to clerical affairs generally, they were both agreed on this point. But the chaplain, who knew the condition of affairs as well as they did, thought the law a bad law, and was determined to abolish it. "It certainly would be very pleasant, Mr. Holdenough, if we could have such a meeting within the confines of the Close. I don't mean to-day, and I don't mean to-morrow; but we might think of it. The bishop, who has the greatest love for the cathedral services, is very much of that mind."

"I do not know that I care very much for any out-of-door gatherings," said the canon.

"But why out of doors?" asked the chaplain.

"Whatever meeting there is in the Close, will, I hope, be held in the Deanery," said the dean; "but of all meetings, I must say that I like meetings such as this the best. Germain, will you pass the bottle?" When they were alone together he always called his son-in-law George; but in company he dropped the more familiar name.

Mr. De Baron, Mrs. Houghton's father, liked his joke. "Sporting men," he said, "always go to a meet, and clerical men to a meeting. What's the difference?"

"A good deal, if it is in the colour of the coat," said the dean.

"The one is always under cover," said the canon. "The other, I believe, is generally held out of doors."

"There is, I fancy, a considerable resemblance in the energy of those who are brought together," said the chaplain.

"But clergymen ain't allowed to hunt, are they?" said Mr. Houghton, who, as usual, was a little in the dark as to the subject under consideration.

"What's to prevent them?" asked the canon, who had never been out hunting in his life, and who certainly would have advised a young clergyman to abstain from the sport. But in asking the question he was enabled to strike a sidelong blow at the objectionable chaplain, by seeming to question the bishop's authority.

"Their own conscience, I should hope," said the chaplain, solemnly, thereby parrying the blow successfully.

"I am very glad, then," said Mr. Houghton, "that I didn't go into the Church." To be thought a real hunting-man was the great object of Mr. Houghton's ambition.

"I am afraid you would hardly have suited us, Houghton," said the dean. "Come, shall we go up to the ladies?"

In the drawing-room, after a little while, Lord George found himself seated next to Mrs. Houghton—Adelaide De Baron, as she had been when he had sighed in vain at her feet. How it had come to pass that he was sitting there he did not know, but he was quite sure that it had come to pass by no arrangement contrived by himself. He had looked at her once since he had been in the room, almost blushing as he did so, and had told himself that she was certainly very beautiful. He almost thought that she was more beautiful than his wife; but he knew—he knew now—that her beauty and her manners were not as well suited to him as those of the sweet creature whom he had married. And now he was once more seated close to her, and it was incumbent on him to speak to her. "I hope," she said, almost in a whisper, but still not seeming to whisper, "that we have both become very happy since we met last."

"I hope so, indeed," said he.

"There cannot, at least, be any doubt

as to you, Lord George. I never knew a sweeter young girl than Mary Lovelace; so pretty, so innocent, and so enthusiastic. I am but a poor worldly creature compared to her."

"She is all that you say, Mrs. Houghton." Lord George also was displeased—more thoroughly displeased than had been his wife. But he did not know how to show his displeasure; and though he felt it, he still felt also the old influence of the woman's beauty.

"I am so delighted to have heard that you have got a house in Munster-court. I hope that Lady George and I may be fast friends. Indeed, I won't call her Lady George; for she was Mary to me before we either of us thought of getting husbands for ourselves." This was not strictly true, but of that Lord George could know nothing. "And I do hope—may I hope—that you will call on me?"

"Certainly I will do so."

"It will add so much to the happiness of my life, if you will allow me to feel that all that has come and gone has not broken the friendship between us."

"Certainly not," said Lord George.

The lady had then said all that she had got to say, and changed her position as silently as she had occupied it. There was no abruptness of motion, and yet Lord George saw her talking to her husband at the other side of the room, almost while his own words were still sounding in his own ears. Then he watched her for the next few minutes. Certainly, she was very beautiful. There was no room for comparison, they were so unlike; otherwise, he would have been disposed to say that Adelaide was the more beautiful. But Adelaide certainly would not have suited the air of Manor Cross, or have associated well with Lady Sarah.

On the next day the marchioness and Ladies Susanna and Amelia drove over to the Deanery in great state, to call on Miss Tallowax, and to take Lady George back to Manor Cross. Miss Tallowax enjoyed the company of the marchioness greatly. She had never seen a lady of that rank before. "Only think how I must feel," she said to her niece, that morning, "I, that never spoke to anyone above a baronet's lady in my life."

"I don't think you'll find much difference," said Mary.

"You're used to it. You're one of them yourself. You're above a baronet's lady—ain't you, my dear?"

"I have hardly looked into all that as yet, aunt." There must surely have been a little fib in this, or the dean's daughter must have been very much unlike other young ladies.

"I suppose I ought to be afraid of you, my dear; only you are so nice and so pretty. And as for Lord George, he is quite condescending." Lady George knew that praise was intended, and therefore made no objection to the otherwise objectionable epithet.

The visit of the marchioness was passed over with the less disturbance to Miss Tallowax because it was arranged that she was to be taken over to lunch at Manor Cross on the following day. Lord George had said a word, and Lady Sarah had consented, though, as a rule, Lady Sarah did not like the company of vulgar people. The peasants of the parish, down to the very poorest of the poor, were her daily companions. With them she would spend hours, feeling no inconvenience from their language or habits. But she did not like gentlefolk who were not gentle. In days now long gone by, she had only assented to the dean, because holy orders are supposed to make a gentleman; for she would acknowledge a bishop to be as grand a nobleman as any, though he might have been born the son of a butcher. But nobility and gentry cannot travel backwards, and she had been in doubt about Miss Tallowax. But even with the Lady Sarahs a feeling has made its way which teaches them to know that they must submit to some changes. The thing was to be regretted, but Lady Sarah knew that she was not strong enough to stand quite alone. "You know she is very rich," the marchioness had said in a whisper; "and if Brotherton marries, your poor brother will want it so badly."

"That ought not to make any difference, mamma," said Lady Sarah. Whether it did make any difference or not, Lady Sarah herself probably hardly knew; but she did consent to the asking of Miss Tallowax to lunch at Manor Cross.

EARLY WORKERS.

AT TAILORING.

TAILORS are Turks—as far as sitting is concerned—everywhere. And so are poor little half-time tailor-boys Turks—or else holiday-making little school-folks, playing a very long game of hunt-the-slipper, and being very serious and intent about it.

Taking them with the Mussulman idea clinging about them, there they are, low down on the flat floor, very Mussulman-like indeed; turbanless, it is true, but with slippers off, reverently; with garments loose; with even the very form of the crescent retained, in the small semicircle into which they are ranged. Still taking them as Turks, too, there they are with a big and superior Turk to rule and counsel and direct them; a tailor-pasha, cross-legged likewise, high up on a divan or throne; the same being, if the prose of facts has to be rigidly adhered to, the top of an oblong wooden table; and so placed that, from it, his highness can see the bent polls of his little subjects, and all that the laps formed by their tucked-in little toes and knees contain. The pasha having also cast off his shoes, à la Turc—unless this be a reversion to the hunt-the-slipper notion; with one slipper nothing like enough to satisfy pastime appetite, but with every slipper off, and ready for slipping in and out, in absurd inextricability and confusion—the recollection flashes into the mind that this shoeless, or bootless, working is the universal custom with tailors, and the question is put, Why is it? Would some essential portion of the rights and privileges of tailordom be forfeited, if the mystery were not observed?

Pasha gave answer with proper Oriental sententiousness and gravity. "Dirties your work."

Nothing could be more conclusive and convincing. When feet are knitted and knotted in and out of legs, boot-toes and boot-heels are brought uppermost in unexpected places, with dangerous power to soil, tear, slit, and otherwise do grievous damage. Let boot-toes and boot-heels be deprived of all soiling and ripping power, therefore; the best method for which is to summarily pull boots off, and place them right away. No better law could possibly have been proposed and passed.

Observation fell next, quickly, upon "tacking."

"Now"—to the pasha—"before you set to work, you seem to sew all your pieces into shape, and to sew them into doubleness, and sometimes trebleness, by large, long stitches——"

"Tacking, and it's to fix."

"Yes, tacking, and it's to fix. But why do tailors take so much trouble? Why don't you use pins?"

"Because a layer of cloth, combined with linen, combined with soap to stiffen

it, combined with wadding—yes, yes, men and boys are padded, often—combined with good 'facing' to keep it all in, form too thick a substance for any pin to go through successfully; displacement would follow pinning inevitably, causing wrong shape and wrong size, both. Besides, if it has been noticed, all materials get treatment according to those materials. It is by this rule that shoemakers never tack, but always nail, using little wooden pegs; that dressmakers never nail, using little wooden pegs, but always pin; that tailors never pin, but always take long, thin thread, and tack. Conceive of a dressmaker knocking in a nail, and of a cobbler armed with a needleful of cotton!"

It was quite a little whirl of explanation. It did not come from the pasha, though. It was just what became beaten up, by looking, and by thinking; whilst the sun shone pleasantly on the little tailor-boys proceeding with their tasks, whilst the fresh air played healthily in upon them through their open window. Far from the pasha entering into such lively and extravagant particulars, all that he vouchsafed was, "Must tack, you see. Couldn't do without."

"Well, then, the tacking itself; do you always do it for these little men, or do they get to be able to tack for themselves?"

The pasha pointed just beneath his throne, where sat a little fellow, particularly painstaking and impressed. It was to be accounted for. He was engaged in the far-forward and proud labour of cutting out his own collar. The brown paper pattern of it was in his hand, he laid the brown paper on to the piece of gray frieze of which the collar was to be made; he chalked round the outline of it, and cut away by this clear mark; he laid the paper pattern on to the coarse linen that was to go next the frieze, he chalked that, he cut it quite accurately as before; he patted and pounded upon the linen heavily, with a resolute rubbing of yellow soap—which stuck the two surfaces of cloth and linen together gallantly—and then, having chalked and cut another piece of cloth to match, as lining, he laid the three pieces in proper order, and went on to the end efficiently.

"To be sure. And in that there was cutting out, as well as tacking; a very advanced position, as can be seen. But boys so young are not entrusted with cutting out larger things, are they?"

No; nor yet with tacking larger things,

either. But, again, this was ascertained more by inference and watching, than by prompt answer that would have made it promptly plain. It would not have been good discipline to have been too talkative before little tailor-boys, who were being taught that to talk was to lose time, since it led to needles being drawn in and out of cloth too slowly; so, as the pasha sat isolated and elevated on his throne, his action was allowed to be his chief explanation, and his action was that he "basted" together, or tacked, sleeves and sleeve-linings, bodies and body-linings, and then flung them down among his little workpeople, much as gauntlets would have been flung into an arena, among knights and squires of old. His pavement of Early Workers—literally "under" him—took up the various challenges, and never shirked or flinched. They could make button-holes; they could "braid"—including the adjustment of a military-looking twirl, or scroll, of the braid at appointed intervals—they could achieve a pocket; could iron; could damp, as its invariable preliminary; could stitch; could sew on buttons; could patch; could join; could soap, and chalk, and cut, and baste, as has been recorded—they had so much skill, in short, and so much rapidity, in their trained little fingers, that the pasha had little time, or little need, for an occasional interlude of stitching himself, but was kept pretty actively employed in preparation, and in overlooking what his little people had wholly and partly done.

"Black thread and wax, please," was a brisk cry, uttered and heard at frequent intervals, as this complicity of work went on.

"Black thread and wax, please;" and every time it came it caused a momentary assumption of hunt-the-slipper business; just a flash of a glance; instantaneously lighting up, and being extinguished, on each little player; for thread, with its skeleton unreality and fibrousness, was for ever getting dragged under little knees and under cloth spread out upon them; wax could, of course, roll, and slip, and slide, and glide, anywhere; and a galvanic shuffle of limbs and undergoing garments occurred—just a lift up and a look—that shot all round the little semicircle, and lasted till the black thread and wax were found. Could these little tailor-boys have been seated upon chairs with a reasonable table in the midst of them, they could have had their materials and their implements

high and dry in safety, within glance of eye, and quick reach of hand. But little tailor-boys, and full-sized tailor-men, scorn tables and chairs, as is well known, in the way of proper using. Chairs, indeed, they banish from their necessities altogether. Tables they admit; but it is only to mount upon them, turning them into a second-floor, with more literal meaning, thereon to ensconce themselves just as orientally as if they were on level ground. Accordingly, as these little tailor-boys used the floor of the room they worked in, for sitting upon and for holding their insignia both, this same maltreated floor held many things to be noted. There was the handy soap, every now and then rubbed on vigorously; there was the loose knot of enlivening scarlet braid; there was a large pair of shear-like scissors; there was an Australian meat-tin half full of water, to damp all seams before ironing them; there was the wet rag with which the damping was to be done; there were the irons themselves—or the geese, if that word be preferred; there were the iron-holders; there was the proverbial board—a smooth length of wood for ironing upon, proving that tailors cannot do without tables really, and might as well reform and yield to civilisation easily; there was an occasional hoop-thimble, occasionally laid down; there was the fire itself, almost as much in the laps of such of the boys as sat next to it, because, since the goose it always kept hot, was always being wanted, it would not do for the fire to be "out," either in the fire-sense, or in the sense of being far away. As for the little Early Workers themselves, the most notable objects at home upon the floor, there were not many of them, it was made known, likely to keep to tailoring when they had expanded into men; "not ten per cent. of them would follow the trade," was the expression.

"It's in this way, you see; what their fathers are, they like to be. Now, I'll ask one or two, and you just listen. Jones!"

One little head looked up.

"What shall you be, Jones, when you leave us?"

"Follow my trade, sir."

And the little head was low down again; and the elbows underneath it were wide out in an energetic stretch.

"Well, that's curious!" It was the inevitable comment on the quick contradiction. "However," when there had

been a laugh, "we'll ask again. It will not go on for long the same, we may be sure. Robinson! What are you going to be?"

"Printer, sir."

"Brown!"

A third young head momentarily raised from its occupation.

"Shall you be a tailor when you're a man?"

"No, sir."

"What then?"

"Waiter, sir. Same as my father."

The Pasha was right then, and this was how he accounted for it.

"One reason why the boys don't like tailoring is, I think, because the tailoring is for ourselves. Anything that is for here"—it was an Industrial School—"is not to their taste at all. What they can do for outside they put their heart into far better."

So human nature was not to be cheated of its everlasting power of remaining human nature, that was clear. Here were these Early Workers exactly like Later Workers, here were these fortune-forgotten children exactly like fortune-remembered children, and they had exactly the same ineradicable dislike to doing what was to rule and necessary, and exactly the same overweening weakness for getting their hands fast in fancy matters that were only occasional, and on which welfare did not absolutely depend at all. But still, as facts were as they were, and as it is wise to go as many steps as possible hand-in-hand with nature, and ineffably foolish to endeavour to stultify and oppose her, would it not be well to contrive to get a little outside work, so that these young Early Workers at tailoring might now and then find their natural desires having natural gratification?

"And so we have tried outside work; as much for that very matter, as for making profit. But what do you suppose we found were outside prices?"

There could be no guess. It was not likely that there could, had there been ever so much foreknowledge, or ever so much audacity at random hitting; for, if there were remembrance, there had been no description of the work taken. What had it been? trousers? waistcoats? coats? jackets?

"Well, it was trousers. Just those common greenish-brownish cord trousers worn by porters at railway-stations. They wanted no delicate work."

That could quite be understood.

"They were just the work that half-timers could do, and do properly and presentably; and when one pair was done, the price for it was—eightpence."

It brought the expected astonishment; another word for which might be, indignation.

"Eightpence a pair," was repeated. "Eight shillings a dozen. And then we were only doing what others do; accepting the price that is accepted everywhere throughout the trade. So, of course, such pay was useless to us; we could employ our boys with far better profit ourselves; and we gave it up. But our young folks do have some work that they like, though, once during the four years that we are teaching them and keeping them. They enjoy making the suit of clothes they are to have given to them to wear outside, when they leave us. There is one of these boys on the floor now who will not be with us much more than a month; I'll speak to him, and you listen. Smith!"

The face was raised upon the instant.

"Think you'll be able to make your own suit, when it's the time for it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will it take you long?"

"No, sir." With a flush mounting on the small cheek, and the young eyes brighter.

"Well, how long? Can you reckon?"

"Two days and a half the coat, sir, two days the trousers, one day the waistcoat; a fortnight altogether."

The quick breath that had brought it out so quickly was being directed downwards again, low over the frieze and braid being joined together expeditiously; but the joining had another momentary stoppage, when amusement was expressed at the calculation.

"How long the coat?"

"Two days and a half."

"How long the trousers?"

"Two days."

"How long the waistcoat?"

"One."

"And those together make a fortnight! Excellent!"

The little Early Worker was right, though; as close examination showed. This was the mode of it: Little ten or twelve year-old tailor-boys have their working-days cut down into half days, with only five hours measured into each half; and the rest, like all half-timers, left for schooling. To this particular little

tailor-boy, therefore, two-and-a-half days' work meant five days' living, reckoning half a day's work in each; five days' living, by scholastic computation, are a week exactly, since poor schools take no heed of Saturdays, and, of course, of Sundays; twice five days' living make up a fortnight—with two whole days and a half for coat, and the other two whole days and a half, or three days strictly—a half day being generously given in for the waistcoat and the trousers—and there was the account, ready for the strictest auditing, and certain to be certified correct. The boy, also, had taken the mean, or average time for coat-making, with himself and his little school-fellows accurately. About twenty half boys—odd description—work during the day; the same being about ten whole boys for the first five working hours of it, and another and different ten whole boys for the remaining five hours. Between them, these make some ten tunics a week; and if twenty boys, working half time, produce ten tunics, that is exactly the same as if ten boys, working whole time, produced the same number; each rate is one tunic for one boy in one week. One tunic for one boy in one week is what the little boarding-schoolboy suggested, and thus, by this other approach, are he and his figures amply vindicated. He alluded, though, to making trousers, also, and to making waistcoats; and this again was right. The whole of these little tailor-boys make trousers and make waistcoats in turn with tunics; of which there are two sorts, some very coarse and plain for everyday wearing, and some finer and a little ornamented, for gala-days and when the boys go to church. Of the trousers, a droll little fact came rising to the surface. They are without pockets. For stringent economical, and possibly other reasons, to Early Workers at tailoring, trouser-pockets are denied.

"Trousers have to last a long time, you know."

"Possibly. But these little fellows working coatless, in their shirts, have to stuff their pocket-handkerchiefs behind their little braces! Look at them!"

"At any rate, that proves that they are allowed pocket-handkerchiefs. And mayn't it allow, by inference, that they have pockets in their tunics? And isn't that compensation?"

It was—when the tunics were on. When they were off, matters did not seem quite so lucid.

"Well, well"—as the thrust told—"let us revert to the trousers. They are made of cotton cord; for we cannot claim for them the good name of corduroy, since corduroy proper is much more expensive; and making due allowance, of course, for boys' occupations and characteristics, there is a regulation period they have to last."

"And what is the regulation period?"

"Two years. And the secret of that great longevity is that they don't have pockets. If they did——"

Ah, if they did, the result, in comparison with the condition of other schoolboys' trousers, could be taken, well and thoroughly, into comprehension! And here let it first be asked, what if, from this hint of these Early Workers at tailoring, it fell out that all juvenile tailors' bills should be reformed? And what if, from this same hint of Early Workers at tailoring, it fell out that all juvenile pocket deposits should be reformed to match? leading to an order for a general turn out of frogs, dead mice, toffy, slate pencil, with a neat, tight, exasperating sew up of a handy aperture in their place? It would only remain then, surely, to manufacture schoolboys' trousers without knee-pieces; so that they might no more crack, split, graze, bulge, smear, stain, lose colour, and become baggy? But, back to the little tailor-boys themselves. There is something more yet to be noted about them; and it must have its turn.

Before children are allowed the full scope of tunic-making and other tailor-work, there is a proper prelude. They have to make shirts. That they should know how to put a needle in, and to pull a needle out, drawing a thread through with it neatly, is the point desired; it is an action that seems foreign, somehow, to boys' fingers; and, to make it familiar, the soft material of shirting is allowed for practice. The boys have to mend torn shirts, also; putting upon them those better-coloured patches that defy concealment, and tell their own tales candidly. There is, as another elementary matter, the patching of cloth clothes, one boy being kept at this constantly; there is the making of cloth-caps, neatly "corded" with cloth of another colour, neatly "poked;" there is the preparation of leathern braces, to cut them, to stitch on tabs and buckles; there is, as the most elementary needlework of all, the darning of large piles of lacerated and debilitated gray woollen socks. Two luckless little boys are told off for this.

They begin about the Wednesday in each week, since the socks are not washed and dried before; and they are filling up holes, and buttressing weak places, shooting in warp or woof, where warp or woof would strengthen, for their allotted five hours of daily industry, and only finding themselves at their dry task's end when the scholastic week has come to an end also. Lastly, for any boy with a fine sartorial instinct, there is a fair prize lying, amongst these varied items of his craft. He may apply his neat stitches, he may apply his power of deft adjustment, to the making of an intricate patch-work quilt. On that, there is opening for design; there is gratification of the sense of contrast and harmony in colours; the quilt when finished, too, is nearly always to be a present to some kind friend of the young tailors collectively, to whom the graceful acknowledgment of a present is due; and in the arrangement of it, the anticipation, and the performance, there is plenty of healthy interest and of variety and refreshment.

There must come the acknowledgment at last, though, that Early Workers who are also industrial scholars, being without the stimulus to exertion that is given to outdoor Early Workers by their weekly pay, are obliged to be subject to some system of rewards and punishment to make them work at all. They are not angels, poor little children; nor are they likely to be. To fully take in which, let note be taken of the following:

"Now what," a schoolmaster was asked—and the matter was narrated publicly by the governor of these little tailor-boys to some brother-governors of other little working-boys, so comes in with complete relevancy and application—"what are the punishments you find it necessary to use?"

"They are various," was the schoolmaster's reply. "According to the case. For inattention to lessons, I cane; for being late, I pull their ears; for anything approaching lying, I flog. So, for disobedience I flog, for being home-sick I flog, for speaking above a whisper in school-time I flog, for disrespect I flog."

"But isn't that," the questioner ventured, "much the same for all?"

"Yes; perhaps that is. With modifications."

"And besides these 'modifications,' do you make no difference in characters?"

"Characters, my dear sir! Absurd!

How can there be difference in boys' characters! Who ever heard of it!"

But all these people, not quite blind, and not quite rhinoceros-hided, who have been attentive to any of these groups of Early Workers from time to time presented to them, have surely seen—to renew the knowledge they will have had before—that boys and girls have characters, and that boys and girls can keep their characters unruined and clearly showing, by means of free usage. To all such people it will be pleasant to know that "modification" punishments were not in favour with the governor who held these present little tailor-boys in his safe custody.

"With many children," was his judgment, "one word, or one act of natural kindness, will do more than years of talking and blows. Try and gain those children's ears; try and influence and soften them. With no parade or show, take a child who has offended away from his fellows to some quiet room; and there speak to him as a sorrowful parent."

And it is to be hoped that, not only these Early Workers, but all others, will find "governors" possessing this breadth of humanity, and will be treated with as much true wisdom, and as tenderly.

SOMETHING NEW.

GLASS, like iron or the bamboo, is, as we are occasionally reminded by commercial enthusiasts, a substance of which the uses defy enumeration. We may drain with it, pave with it, roof with it, even build with it, if we are careful to construct our semi-transparent abode with the toughened glass, on which stone-throwers may wreak their utmost spite in vain. But that we should wear it; that a glass great-coat should shield us from the wintry storm, and vitreous gloves protect our fingers when we go abroad; that our wives and daughters should be splendid in glass gowns, and glass hats be hung up in club vestibules—is certainly an idea wild enough to have found a place among the freakish fancies of Dean Swift.

The glass-wool of the Germans, the *coton de verre* of the French, promises to take a high place among the textile fabrics of the future. It is only in Bohemia, yet matchless for her mastery over tinted glass, that this wondrous thread can as yet be manufactured, tough, fine, and so pliant that incredulous worldlings find it hard to

realise that the web they handle is born of mere silex and alkali. If it resembles anything, that substance is silk. The very high price of this novel material (sixteen shillings a pound) acts as a hindrance to the recognition of its merits, but it is eagerly bought up by chemists and experimentalists as an indestructible tissue for filters, brushes, and other purposes, although some years may probably elapse before we see tourists' glazed suits for summer wear advertised on railway hoardings.

A well which, like some piping bullfinch or highly-trained canary, draws its own water, and yet which is not on the costly artesian principle, deserves to be reckoned as something new. The well devised by M. Haurian, an engineer at Meaux, can do this, pretty cheaply. M. Haurian's sheet-anchor in this invention was the fact that most soils are packed, as it were, in layers of moderate thickness, some strata being porous, others waterproof. The well-digger finds, some feet below the surface, a store of water. This is his motive power, the force he seeks. He pushes on, then, through stiff clay or many-hued green sand, till he taps a second spring, which the weight of the water of the first, falling from the top to the bottom of a tube, brings to the light of day, exactly as a waterfall in the Swiss Alps drives a turbine.

A Hungarian chemist teaches us to cook by cold. The Arctic voyager, then, can dispense, or nearly so, with fuel for the preparation of his necessary meals, and indeed the germ of the invention was probably the well-known property of iron, mercury, and other metals, which in the polar regions burn and blister the skin as a red-hot poker would do. Meat exposed to an artificial cold of forty degrees centigrade below the freezing-point is already sufficiently cooked to render it wholesome, and may be made appetising by a very brief sojourn before the fire. Hungarian enterprise has been equal to the occasion, and a company at Pesth now busies itself in tinning and exporting the cold, the very cold provisions of Dr. Sawiczewesky.

False hair, for ladies' wear, being recognised as a necessity of modern social existence, the want must be somehow supplied. But live hair, hair bought, to use the technical phrase, "on foot"—the hair of girls and women bribed to submit their locks to the shears—grows annually scarcer and dearer. When the modest

demand for tresses was influenced by a few elderly dames in need of wigs, the supply was easily secured by agents who bargained with the peasant maids of Brittany and Auvergne. Paris alone would now consume all, and more than all, of the available capillary crop in France, and Marseilles, the present centre of the hair trade, deals with Spain, the East, and especially the Two Sicilies, for the forty tons of dark hair which she annually makes up into sixty-five thousand chignons.

"Dead hair" has something of a sinister, sepulchral sound; but as, without it, the cheap curls, fronts, and chignons could not be made at the price, it may be comfortable to know that the original owners of the raw material are, as likely as not, alive and well. Rag-pickers value no unconsidered waif and stray of the street, short of gold ring or silver spoon, so highly as the clotted combings of female hair, soon to be washed with bran and potash, carded, sifted, classed, and sorted. There are, commercially, seven colours of hair, and three degrees of length. Much dead hair enters into the cheaper of the three hundred and fifty thousand "pieces" annually made in France. The dearest chignon cost some five-and-twenty pounds; the cheapest a fiftieth part of that amount. England is the best customer, and, close upon her heels, comes America.

A village doctor in the sandy department of the Landes, M. Pallas by name, conceived the bold idea of constructing a lamp that should be fed by fierce-burning but smoky resin, the obstinate properties of which had baffled all previous inventors. Allying himself with a local professor of chemistry, M. Guillemare, the doctor has forced this stubborn slave to do good service. The resin, double distilled, and burned in a lamp having a strong upward draught, gives a magnificent white light, steady, smokeless, and brilliant. Here, then, we have a new and safer rival to petroleum, though perhaps as much cannot be said of another protégée of MM. Pallas and Guillemare, the rectified essence of turpentine.

Far more ambitious, and far more imposing, is the new electric lamp of M. Jabloschhoff, a retired Russian officer of the Imperial Engineers. Previous inventors, such as Duboscq, Foucault, or Serrin, had put their trust in springs, click-wheels, and ratchet work, to keep the precious charcoal points near enough to one another to allow the dazzling voltaic

are to overleap its little span of air. M. Jabloschhoff thrusts aside all this delicate mechanism, and does his illuminating by the help of two candles, the grease of which, so to speak, is an insulating substance, that fuses and volatilises under the influence of heat, while the wicks are a pair of pencils of hard gas-charcoal. Urged by a powerful battery, these strange tapers, if we may give credence to the report which M. Denayrousse, in whose workshops the experiments have taken place, has addressed to the Paris Academy of Sciences, blaze superbly, yet with the regularity of mere everyday sperms or paraffins.

The invaluable eucalyptus—our own noble Australian gum-tree, for which the botanists might surely have found a name implying its mystic kindred with *Æsculapius*, god of healing—is more warmly welcomed by foreigners than by British colonists. It is establishing more than one little oasis of health in the fever-stricken Campagna of Rome. It is doing yeoman's service in Algeria. Marsh-fevers, and, strange to say, mosquitoes, disappear before the eucalyptus like ghosts at cock-crow. The very locusts turn aside from those majestic ramparts of live wood, and swoop upon the unprotected wheat-fields to left and right. Every doctor, every inspector, reports that pestilential swamps and deadly lakes have been sucked dry of their poison by plantations of the health-giving tree; that fever-dens such as Tug-gurt, Zérazilda, and Issers, have been made wholesome by its influence; and that it acts with a rapidity little less than magical. Perhaps, thanks to the eucalyptus, even the terrible West Coast of Africa may one day be made habitable for white men.

The Carnouba, from Brazil, is one of those lavishly-endowed children of the tropics, that give everything to the man who will but take the trouble to plant them. It is a palm, and, like most palms, resists the longest drought, wearing its green crown of leaves when all else withers. Flour, wine, vinegar, and gum may all be extracted from the rich sap of the carnouba, the roots of which furnish a medicine that possesses many of the properties of sarsaparilla, while the young stems form inexpensive and durable pipes for the conveyance of water.

The Gras musket, the new breechloader which the French are now putting, as quickly as an economic Assembly will permit, into the hands of their troops, is

in many respects an improvement on the Chassepot, as the Chassepot itself was a superior weapon to the famous Prussian needle-gun. The Chassepot had two serious defects. In rapid firing it grew heated to such an extent as to blister the fingers of the soldier as he reloaded, and it soon became clogged and foul with the moist black residuum of the gunpowder. M. Gras, preserving the former gauge, has applied himself to construct a piece free from these faults. He has replaced the combustible silk cartridge by a neat metal one. For the easily-broken needle he substitutes a tiny hammer. A tinier claw, the mechanism of which is set in motion as the musket is cocked, tosses out the shell of the metal cartridge, and leaves the chamber clean and bright for a fresh loading. The new musket, more certain and more convenient than its predecessor, carries farther than the Chassepot, making good practice at thirteen hundred English yards. The French army, in case of need, would embark well provided on the rough and bloody work of war.

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

IN A PUNT.

I AM quite aware, my dear madam, that there are two sides to a sawpit, and that the top-sawyer has an ancient and inalienable right to look down on his humble assistant below; but it is curious that life should be made up of a series of sawpits; that in every walk, and every swim of life, there should be a superior and inferior end. The late Mr. Douglas Jerrold pointed out that it was absurd to expect tenpenny nails to have anything to do with tin tacks; this remark being made with special reference to the pretension of wholesale dealers to take precedence of retailers, of the airs put on by Mincing-lane, to distinguish itself from Petticoat-lane, for instance. There is, indeed, no doubt that the necessity of looking down upon somebody is one of the most urgent of human requirements. It is said that it is impossible to find an Irishman so poor that he has not a still poorer Irishman officiating as his hanger-on; and it may be added that there lives not the Englishman or Englishwoman, with soul so dead as not to despise somebody. That this feeling should exist among the top-sawyers of serious sawpits is not wonderful, but it is strange that it should be carried into the play-

grounds of life, where we only make believe to saw, as it were. But in no other place do the top-sawyers give themselves more airs. How often during the pleasant lotus-eating season just past away, have you—even you, my dear madam—looked contemptuously down from the serene altitudes of a Highland moor upon the tourist, who dared to cumber the railway-stations, and infest that particular glen on your husband's shootings, through which there is a right of way, with his ungainly presence? Again, what is the opinion of Mrs. Mountelephant, the famous yachtswoman who goes everywhere, from China to Peru, with her husband, of the ten-tonners and such small deer? What again does Mrs. Lawntennyson think of old-fashioned Mrs. Croquetdale; and with what feelings does the dashing Mrs. Grouseby, who not only walks with the guns, but can knock her bird over handsomely, regard quiet Mrs. Long Bowyer, whose idea of bliss is an archery meeting with its army of clergymen? The men, too, are, if possible, worse than the women. Scatterleigh, who hunts the season through in the Pytchley country, takes little account of Flutterby, who "manages" a day now and then with the Queen's; and like the noble fox-hunter that he is, laughs at the notion of riding about all day after a "calf kicked out of a cart." With what contempt does Mr. Marchhare, who courses in the Ashdown country, look upon the "one horse" coursing meetings held in the lowlands, and what can be more thoroughly superior than the smile of Newmarket, at the mention of 'appy 'Ampton. I know quite well that my friend Feathertoncourt, who slays his thousands and tens of thousands of short and long tails in his Norfolk preserves, smiles inwardly as I dwell on the interesting bag I brought home the other day, consisting of three-and-a-half brace of partridges, a solitary cock pheasant, six rabbits, a woodcock, a leash of hares, a wood-pigeon, and a wild-duck—all within ten miles of Hyde-park. I know that in his heart he puts me down as a Cockney potterer and pot-hunter, on whom the charms of a drive would be thrown away, and that this is the reason why he does not ask me down to shoot at Kilby Hall. He feels towards me as a cricketer does towards a player at rounders; as the crack billiard-player towards him whose soul is moved by the charms of bagatelle;

as Markby, whose whist-playing is universally admired, looks upon old Mudleigh, who swears by cribbage; as our vicar, who plays chess, looks upon his curate, who is a dead hand at draughts; as, in fact, my friend Hackler, who believes salmon-fishing to be the one solitary thing in the world worth living for, looks upon me as I sit in a punt on the tranquil Thames, watching a float, in the hope that some rash and greedy pike may be tempted out of the weeds in this early autumn time by the silvery glitter of the dace, at the opposite end of the rod and line to that occupied by the writer. I dread to speak of fishing before Hackler, for he, so to speak, rises immediately and bolts with the whole subject. It is grand to watch his superior smile as I prattle artlessly of six-pound barbel and ten-pound jack, of mighty roach weighing over a pound and a half apiece, and of cunning chub refusing to hearken to the voice of the charmer. At last his eye brightens, and he dashes off, and before I know where I left off I am dragged up and down rapid rivers and over fjelds and firds and fosses, among ghillies and "pige," and other strange creatures, while about me leap and swirl and snoo' gigantic salmon—thirty and forty pounders—till I lose all previous conceit of my fine Nottingham tackle and the skill that I displayed in landing that remarkable barbel last Tuesday. But I cling to my punt-fishing for all that. It may not be heroic, or athletic, or even manly, but it is eminently pleasant and easy, and I am old enough to know the value of these qualities in a world made up of work and worry.

No human being has been so long and so persistently caricatured as the angler of the Thames and the Lea. John Leech made the woes of Mr. Briggs familiar to all, but years before he was born funny little pictures of anglers in trouble were drawn by humorous artists. Perhaps the finest extant collection of squibs against anglers is that in the possession of the Piscatorial Society—a fishing association now some forty years old. In the album of the society are arranged choice bits of Seymour and Leech side by side with the work of the preceding generation of caricaturists, who painted with a bigger and clumsier brush and smeared on their colour over-thickly, but yet were fellows of infinite jest. Since Doctor Samuel Johnson, whose great natural genius was entirely unfettered by accurate information,

wrote the angler down a fool, innumerable caricaturists have given force to his trenchant and unjust definition. Byron, too, whose nature was entirely incapable of appreciating the so-called father of angling, rested content with dubbing him a cruel coxcomb, and consigned him to everlasting scorn. The amusing part of all these onslaughts on angling is, that they are purely and simply Cockney. It has never occurred to Scotsmen or Irishmen, or the young man from the country, to laugh at salmon and trout fishing. On the contrary. From Devonshire to Sutherlandshire the pursuit of fish has ever been held in equal respect with the pursuit of furred and feathered quarry. It is the Cockney angler who has been made the butt of Cockney humour, and it cannot be denied that much fun has been got out of him. The world is so much the richer by this matter for laughter that it would be churlish to quarrel with the facetious draughtsmen, who have depicted the angler in a thousand uncomfortable predicaments. During the last few seasons he has been handed over, as it were, to the secular arm, and his life has at times been made a burden to him by steam-launches, which fright the fish from their propriety, and spoil sport, though they make none. But the angler lives through it all. He is as tenacious of life as a tench, and pursues his favourite pastime with the calm long-suffering of a martyr. He consoles himself with the reflection that Dame Juliana Berners incorporated her treatise of "fysshynge with an angle," in a volume on hunting and hawking, to the end that it might not come into the hands of "eche ydle persone," but into those of "gentyll and noble men who would use this crafty disport for no covetousness." Dame Juliana was clearly of another mind from Doctor Johnson, and, in her admiration of the surroundings of angling, equalled Mr. John Bright, who loves the sport as a means of refreshing mind and body. Perhaps the everlastingly quoted Izaak Walton is responsible for bringing on the gentle craft much of the contempt with which certain persons choose to regard it. He wrote well and pleasantly—this ancient hosier—but his talk about the "contemplative man" is beside the mark. It is not much to the credit of the Fleet-street tradesman that, in a stirring time, he poked and potted about the Thames and Lea instead of, as my American

friends would say, "taking a hand" in the momentous business which occupied men of tougher texture. To the present writer all his contemplative twaddle proves Izaak to have been a poor creature, who escaped the responsibilities which weighed heavily on better men, by sinking his manhood in his shop and his fishing. He talks of fishing as if it were a serious occupation, and although one can hardly lash oneself into fury against the man who, by dint of careful picking of other men's thoughts, wrote a delightful book, it is impossible not to mark his utter want of fibre.

The real merit of the quieter sorts of angling, and of punt-fishing in particular, is the relief that it affords to active, strenuous workers, wearied andhipped with battling with the world; and from this point of view I take leave to think it underrated. Since the tide set in the direction of athleticism a strange notion has possessed men whose lives are passed in severe and monotonous brainwork, that the best way to "clear away the cobwebs" is to work oneself nearly to death physically. Infected with this belief, men who rarely walk four miles a day set off on long and arduous walking-trips, and return home far more jaded than when they started. Now angling offers a delightful relief from work of all kinds, physical and mental. Requiring exact attention, without reasoning or reflection, it, without wearying the body, reduces the mind, for the time being, to a natural state. As the punt-angler sits watching his float, he is exercising merely his faculty of perception. If a well-conditioned man, he does not occupy himself with anything save his float and the state of his bait. For the time being the only faculty exercised is vigilance—the attribute of the savage; other faculties being merged entirely in this one. Thus, not only physical but mental rest is secured, and the effect is inexpressibly invigorating. The wholesome excitement of hooking a big fish, now and then, prevents stagnation, and the general result is such a genuine unbending of the bow as can be attained by no other means.

As the early morning mists rise over Cliefden-woods, I drop quietly down stream. When I say early morning, I must not be understood to mean that the Thames mists at this time of year rise at the uncanny hours affected by Scotch steamboats and mail-coaches. In the autumn the angler will do well to let the

day become properly aired before he wets a line, and he will then enjoy a prospect of nature lifting her veil. Bit by bit the fog clears off, until the whole river glows like burnished gold, and the autumn foliage shines in its gay livery of many hues, almost recalling the startling contrasts of the American forests when steeped in the soft warm haze of the Indian summer. As that famous fisherman Harry Wilder pushes his punt in leisurely fashion through the railway bridge below Maidenhead, I hear a passer-by on the tow-path wake the echoes of that celebrated structure with an enquiry as to the whereabouts of the great engineer who built it. The question, "Where's Brunel?" elicits a torrent of comically-accentuated reply, which may be heard almost to Bray Lock, whither we are tending. As the echo dies away the silence becomes—well, not appalling. I am aware that this is the epithet in use, but like many other sayings, beliefs, acts, and deeds, it is stupid and meaningless. What can there be to appal any fairly-constituted person in silence? By exercising a flight of fancy, I can just realise that the Cockney hobbledehoy, who is generally alluded to as "Arry," would feel uncomfortable if he were condemned to forego the sound of the human voice, and especially of his own, for five or six hours. 'Arry, I make no doubt, would feel "lonesome," as the Americans call it—a state of feeling difficult to understand. What kind of person save 'Arry could feel dull in his own company, uninfested by noise and vulgar racket?

There was uproar enough on this pretty bit of water the last time I saw it, but then the idlers of Maidenhead, and Taplow, and Cookham had been reinforced by a strong contingent from Moulsey and Teddington, Twickenham and Richmond. The occasion of the unwonted gathering, during which Skindle's lawn was actually profaned by hobnailed boots, was a punting-match between a Moulsey man and a local artist, half a mile down stream from Maidenhead Bridge and back again. Immense excitement prevailed, and the crowd on the bridge and towpath must have included at least five hundred persons. The knowing ones who came from Moulsey, like Assyrians as they were, to spoil the "countrymen" at innocent Taplow, brought with them gold if not purple, and the rustling of their bank-notes was as the west wind lingering among the osiers. There was a decidedly sporting cut about

these men, whose confidence in the Moulsey champion was unbounded. Their raiment was all great seams and mysterious pockets, and the angle at which they cocked their beavers, I mean bowlers, indicated a desire to "get on" their money, an operation much facilitated by the good nature of the unsuspecting natives, who, albeit standing out for odds, at last backed the local celebrity with some freedom, and the Moulsey men rejoiced at investing their money on such favourable conditions. It proved but a fleeting joy. At first their champion indulged them with hopes of victory, but the young man from the country soon proved too much for him, and won as he liked amid yells of delight from the rural innocents assembled, who then declared that they had known all the while that the beaten man could not "stay." It was excellent fun this punting race, and it was wonderful to see the pace the two stalwart competitors got out of their craft. Punting is capital sport for powerful young men, but I must warn those of my readers who may be inclined to take it up as a pastime, that punt-poles are like performing dogs and singing birds, in their resistance to the blandishments of an amateur. In professional hands the punt-pole goes down to the bottom, takes hold of it and lets go again without accident; but in unpractised hands is apt to take root as it were in the bottom of the river, under which circumstances the puntsman must either let go his pole, or go into the water.

There is no shouting this morning, as we catch sight of the tower of the church of Bray—famous for its adhesive vicar. The history of this worthy man is, of course, mixed and clouded by a variety of traditions and applications. So far as can be discovered, the facts concerning an ancient vicar of the Tudor period were adapted by the writer of the famous song to the transition period, brought to an end by a happy escape from the Stuarts and all their belongings. The genuine, original, "perpetual vicar" was one Simon Aleyn, who, living under Henry the Eighth, Edward the Fourth, Mary, and Elizabeth, was first a Papist, then a Protestant, then a Papist, and at last a Protestant again. The reason of this flexibility is given by Fuller, and to all but fierce enthusiasts will appear good and sufficient. "He had seen some martyrs burnt at Windsor, and found this fire too hot for his tender temper. This vicar, being taxed by one with being a turncoat and an unconstant

changeling, 'Not so,' said he, 'for I have always kept my principle, which is this, to live and die the vicar of Bray.' Other curious people are connected with Bray church. Sir John Foxle's monumental brass, representing that worthy baronet between his two wives, must, I think, have suggested to Gay the famous scene between Macheath, Polly Peachum, and Lucy Lockit. I love, too, the curious old house with the exterior staircase still preserved, which nestles in one corner of Bray churchyard.

While I have been, not thinking, but allowing memories of Simon Aleyn to drift across my mind's eye, as the image of the massive church tower is impressed upon the retina of the actual organ, Harry Wilder has brought himself to believe that, although the day is a world too fine, and the water too fine also, and the weeds not yet sufficiently swept away, there is yet hope of beguiling a jack of respectable size into taking the glittering dace affixed to my hook. As becomes a philosopher I am sceptical, but my sense of the fitness of things prevents me, an amateur, from contradicting a professional of approved reputation, who during the past season has scored a grand total of seventy-and-seven Thames trout—the captives of his punt and his pole—assisted by the tackle of his patrons. So I sit quietly and watch my float dancing in the sun, and enjoy absolute peace; for Harry Wilder is far too good a fisherman to break in upon the spell of calm which to me is inexpressibly precious. In the meadow by the river's brink placid beeves are feeding, but they are too far off for me to hear the low crunch-crunch as they bury their broad noses in the rich grass. The very birds, which in spring-time fill the air with sweet sounds, are silent now, and there is none of the vile tinkling of bells which often makes a walk across a Swiss alp intolerable. There is no hum of insects, nor any sight of them, save of a dragon-fly, who seems to have lost his way. As the midday sun pours down his grateful heat, the moorhen and the coot ensconce themselves among the long osiers, and the swan, with her gray but nearly full-grown cygnets, glides noiselessly by. There is a delicious sense of restfulness in the air, far more grateful than the petulant gustiness of spring. All nature seems in repose, as if enjoying an afternoon nap after the stirring times of spring and summer. The fish, by-the-way, appear as tranquilly disposed as everything else, for

an hour and a half has elapsed without the slightest symptom of a run. I am not disappointed; for nothing disgusts me like too much sport, save when courting the merry gudgeon with a red worm. One cannot have too much of the gudgeon, for he is good to eat and pleasant to catch—for an hour. But one could not spend a day in gudgeon-fishing, the sensation would—as a humble but enthusiastic fisherman puts it—be like being "kicked to death by spiders." This is why I love the wary pike. He does not worry me out of my calm. The "tyrant of the watery plains" may be cruel and voracious, but he is not fidgety. He does not play with my bait, nibble and nibble, and then walk off. He may be a long time making up his mind. So am I sometimes, but when it is made up—but I digress. This morning the "wary luce" chooses to remain "mid wrack and rushes hid." Live bait gorge-fishing is supposed to be the most killing method in this water, especially for big fish, but they are apathetic to-day. But stay, just as I have been two hours at work, or rather at rest, the float slowly disappears, reappears, and slowly vanishes again. This is very different from the rush with which the pike takes the bait later in the season. To-day he takes it so gingerly that the "run" is doubtful after all. My watch is referred to, and the traditional twelve minutes' space and law assigned to my possible fish. The line trickles rather than runs out, but there is nothing for it but to wait the twelve minutes, a period of delicious uncertainty almost approaching emotion. At last the twelve minutes are over; I gather in the line slowly and tenderly, till it is nearly taut, and then strike in hope of good luck. I have him sure enough. Not a monster certainly, but a good handsome fish in prime condition. For all the practical part of fishing, that is, the pleasure of landing a fish, a Thames trout of five or six pounds will do quite as well as a larger one, and frequently will show far better sport. The "top-weights" are apt to grow sluggish. They make one grand rush and then give it up, or relapse into dogged but passive resistance. As I land my third jack, the afternoon sun is getting low, and I am warned that roach may be slain above Boulter's Lock, so we gather up tackle and make for the roach swim. Hardly is our fine tackle out than the evening mists rise from the fields and the light wanes. It is capital fun

after the long day's reposeful quest of jack. The roach are evidently "on," for no sooner is the dainty roach-tackle out than we begin to land these dainty nibblers. They are not small fry either, but full, fair, and fat, mostly about three-quarters of a pound in weight. Roach-fishing requires a keen eye and a quick hand—and, in fact, should only be attempted by far an hour or two before dinner, when the human animal is hungry and active in mind and body. While it lasts, the fun of roach-fishing is bright and sparkling, and as night comes swiftly on the sense of sight grows sharper and sharper in the endeavour to catch the first quiver of the nearly invisible float. As the roach bite on, the mists rise like theatrical gauzes, and cover river and meadow as with a pall. As I pull out my last roach, a good plump "pounder," Wilder again takes his punting-pole and we drop through Boulter's Lock down to Taplow, where a dinner—not of freshwater fish, awaits us. For myself I am not fanatical as to the gastronomic value of pike and roach. My three pike, however, will be greatly relished by a friend whose faith in Thames jack is unflinching. He cooks them himself in a way of his own, which I must confess has its merits. He declares that jack, boiled or fried, baked or roasted, are simply spoilt, and therefore stews his fish in an allowance of butter, which would scare out of their lives the prudent housewives who keep a watchful eye on the "best fresh" at two shillings per pound. To this butter he adds a little good gravy and some finely-chopped parsley, and his sauce when thickened and poured over his fish is excellent. It should be mentioned, however, that the fish undergoes a preliminary rubbing with salt, and hanging up to dry for several hours, before he is consigned to the stew-pan. The time and the butter appear to be well spent, as they make edible what was worthless before; but for my own part, I think the butter, and the gravy, and parsley much better laid out upon a red mullet of a pound and a half or two pounds in weight. But tastes differ, for I can find a man who prefers tench to eels, gudgeon to smelts, and perch to soles. There is no mistake, however, about the very odd fish which now and then gets caught by rod and line at Twickenham or Teddington deeps—to wit, the Thames flounder, a genuine dainty either in sootje or fried. Not very long ago, there was

great fun in netting flounders between Chiswick and Chelsea, but penny steam-boats have not improved the value of that fishery, any more than steam-launches have the choice swims in the upper reaches of the Thames. Just now, however, they are less pernicious than in the summer months, because fewer in number, the verdict of the angler being, "the fewer the better." The campers-out, too, have disappeared, and the rowing-parties from Oxford to London vanished till next Henley regatta. Whereat the merry and wise angler rubs his hands and rejoices that, after the vexations and interruptions of the summer months, the transient plagues of the Thames are gone, leaving his favourite river to silence and to him.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER III. YES.

"CELIA, who is that young man? You wrote down his name as—yes, here it is—Walter Gordon. What business could he have here with you?"

The deafness of the organist of Deepweald was no longer comparative. He was as deaf as a stone. Very deaf men can sometimes manage to hear familiar voices, but John March was deaf even to the voice of Celia. Even she had to communicate with him by writing. No wonder that he was more than ever possessed by one idea, and that his mind was filled by it just as his ears were, now and henceforth, by his own music—for they were closed to any other. She had to write her answer now; and it was not easy. Could he have heard her speak she would have found it difficult to say who was Walter Gordon—a private memory of Lindenheim who had suddenly come to life again in Deepweald. But to write down the whole story in a few words, as fast as her pencil could move, was a sheer impossibility. She was learning to write fast, but the process was still an effort to her, and half her trouble was employed in making her words easily legible.

"I—knew—him—at—Lindenheim."

"Who is he? What is he? What is he doing here?"

"I—do—not—know."

"What has he been saying to you?"

That was doubly impossible to answer.

"He—met—me—in—the—street. He—called—to—see—me. We—were—friends—at—Lindenheim. We—have—been—talking—of—Lindenheim."

"And you don't know who he is—where he comes from?"

"No."

"How is it you never spoke of him to me? I don't remember his name in any of your letters." He spoke anxiously; and indeed his great idea had never included in it one possibility with regard to Celia—that of a young man. It was likely enough, if he had the dimmest knowledge of the world, that the sudden appearance in his house of a handsome young man, an old and unheard-of friend of Celia, should trouble him.

"I—did—not—think—he—mattered."

"Everything matters. I don't choose you should have friends and acquaintances out of Deepweald. I don't know who this Walter Gordon may be, and I don't care. But I do care that—Celia, if this Walter Gordon calls here again you will not be at home. Write 'yes.' Do you hear?"

Celia was longing to tell her father the whole story of Walter Gordon—how he had been something more than her friend at Lindenheim, how he had set himself to take care of her from the very day of her arrival there, how he had devoted himself to make life there safe and pleasant for her, how grateful she ought to be if he had not been too much her friend for gratitude. All this could have been told in a very few easy words. But no wonder that the deaf are an unhappier race than the blind. The blind lose looks, which, in eight cases out of ten mean nothing, and in the ninth case lie. But they lose nothing else. The deaf have only those meaningless or deceptive eye-glances whereby to learn and judge of all things; and as a substitute for the voice, which is the soul, have only barren sighs or symbolic words. What can they know from a forced shout or a hurried scrawl? What can "yes" or "no" mean without the voice to put heart or light into them? To the deaf, passion can be but a mathematical formula, with some wretched x or y or z to stand for "I love you." The face is but an accident; the voice alone is the man or woman.

And so, instead of thinking aloud to her father about Walter Gordon, Celia had to think silently, and no clairvoyance enabled her father to read her unspoken words.

There was a delicate fineness about all she thought and felt concerning her Herr Walter that defied being put suddenly upon paper—far more being extracted and concentrated into a "yes" or "no." And yet no other answer than one of these was open to her. How could she argue or protest without any tangible reason to help her—with a lead pencil and a scrap of paper? And certainly she could not answer "no."

She must answer "yes," then. For the first time she was conscious of tyranny. Life had already felt black enough, but this command was depriving her of her last dream of sunshine. For the last moments of his visit the old Herr Walter had come back again, and brought back to her the feeling of peace and sympathy that had once been inseparable from him. His companionship, though reduced to a bare chance every now and then, would prevent her from feeling altogether alone in the world, while she carried on a passive, waiting struggle against the blank and lonely emptiness of her days. Was there to be nothing she could have and keep to herself? It was very hard, and she felt the tears come into her eyes.

But that was one of the things to which the deaf are not blind. John March had been keen-sighted at the best of times; at these, his worst, his sight had grown doubly keen and watchful. He had ordered Celia to deny herself to the visits of a young man, and, instead of writing "yes" at once and obediently, as a matter of course, she was standing before him doing nothing, though with pencil and paper in hand, and ready to cry, if, indeed, she were not crying. His heavy brows drew together ominously. He did know the world well enough to know of a certain phantom that has a way of interfering with great ideas and scattering them to the winds. After all, it must be supposed that he had been human enough to have learned such knowledge, however imperfectly, in some far-off day, or he would hardly have been the father of Celia.

Think of what a man feels who has laid out his whole life, step by step, and not only his own life, but that of another, as if he were playing a game at chess against the world, and then finds himself likely to be the victim of a fool's mate before he has completed his opening! His deafness even was not so fatal as what seemed to be coming upon him now; and

yet it was the old story. Many a more human father has felt the same. Such or such a career in life for son or daughter is planned with consummate prudence, all things go rightly, there is not a hitch or a loose screw or an uncoiled wheel anywhere in the whole machine. Suddenly, from Heaven knows where, drops from the air upon the scene some new and undreamed-of He or She, and in the twinkling of an eye the Plan is—nowhere. Locksmiths are not the only people who are food for Love's laughter. There might not be much in this, and yet Celia, that type of good training and pattern of docility, was doing all things, even weeping—at least he could see her tears—rather than write one simple word of three letters.

"What is the matter, Celia? Are you crying because I tell you not to see Walter Gordon?"

All her delicate films of feeling, not love as yet tangibly, but rosy with the tint that comes from but one possible dye, were as if they had undergone a coarse rent when she heard herself charged with crying because she was not to see him. Pride rose up in arms; injustice was upon her. Her tears had come, she knew, from a far more complex and deep-down fountain than anything so straightforwardly natural as that wherewith she had been charged. Perhaps her father was less wrong in his surmise than she knew—but then she did not know. Instead of either "yes" or "no" she scribbled:

"I'm—not—crying. I—don't—care—about—seeing—anyone."

"All the better. I want nothing more. Write 'yes' then," he said harshly.

"Yes."

In spite of pride, a tear, full-blown, fell upon the paper as she wrote the word. It was not wholly because she had been signing the death-warrant of that poor ghost of comfort that her empty life had hitherto left her. Her father had been her tyrant always—that went without saying, and she was as much accustomed to tyranny as to the cathedral tower—but he had never been glaringly unjust to her before. And injustice is harder to bear than cruelty. And what made it all the harder on her was that, had she delayed her signature but the space of one tear-drop more, she would have saved herself from the literal expression of a promise that, despite all temptation, she would have to keep inviolably. For no sooner had "yes" been written than she—but

not her father—heard a knock at the door. It might have been attacked by a battering-ram, and the musician would not have heard.

"And," he said, "that you will not stop to speak to him if you meet him." He was talking like a Turk or Spaniard to his daughter, and as if his experience in love affairs, whatever that of so ill-favoured a man may have been, had been drawn from anywhere but England. It was cruelly unjust to Celia; but then, ever since her memorable escapade in going to hear Clari years ago against orders, he had never trusted her. And that again argued ill for the character of that love-story which even the most ill-favoured share with their betters. It may be that as Celia grew up into womanhood she grew also into some suggestion of other deep, dark eyes, that had been the windows of a less honest soul. But this time the "yes" remained unwritten.

It was Mr. Swann who had thus far saved her. He was not a more frequent visitor than others, but he had always, from the days of St. Dorcas, retained a sort of one-third gallant, one-third jocular, and one-third fatherly interest in Celia, and would have been good-natured to her beyond the point of Sunday dinners had the impractical organist allowed.

"Good morning, Miss Celia," he said, bowing to the organist, who bowed again, with a dignified gesture, to a chair less littered than the others, and then went straight to his writing-table, taking his pipe and carrying it with him. He did not care to display his infirmity, which at any rate gave him the advantage which some sufferers from street concerts and home whispers will almost envy him, of being able to work under all conditions undisturbed, and so to lose no moment of time—solitary in the midst of full talk, and listening, undisturbed and undisturbable, to imagined harmonies.

"I see March is as hard at it as ever. Well, it ought to be something A1 when it's done, to make up for the time. I'm come to hear what Dr. Randal says of him. It was yesterday, wasn't it?"

Mr. Swann had kept his old peculiarity of saying everything as if it were a first-rate joke; his eyes twinkled even when he spoke gravely, as though his simplest question were a conundrum and his barrenest remark an epigram.

"Yes," said Celia, "Dr. Randal did see him. And——"

"I hope it was good news?"

"It was the very worst. He finds no hope——"

"Nonsense, Miss Celia. While there's life there's hope, you know. But I'm sorry to hear that—very sorry indeed. One might as well be a land agent on board ship as a musical man without ears. March ought to go to London."

Somehow Celia thought that there was an increase of humour in Mr. Swann's tone, which, she now knew, meant increase of sympathy.

"In fact, Miss Celia, he ought to go. I've got to say something to you, Miss Celia, that you ought to hear. You're sure he can't?"

"He cannot hear a word."

"So much the better. So much the worse, I mean. I heard something to-day from Gaveston—my son-in-law, you know, and cousin to Lady Quorne."

"Bad news, of course," said Celia. But she was not thinking of any new trouble that might be coming from the outer world. John March's worldly knowledge had been considerably at fault when he had so conspicuously written "Danger" over the head of Walter Gordon. Girls have fallen in love, over head and ears, for less reasons; and Celia was a girl after all, even though she was John March's daughter, and only this terrible Herr Walter's friend. Of course, as all the world knows, nothing is so easy as for young men and girls to be friends and to remain so—for a little while.

"Yes, cousin to Lady Quorne," went on Mr. Swann, abstractedly. That was the family watchword, and was constantly cropping up whenever a Swann was in want of something to say. It stood for the weather. "And a singular woman—lady I should say, she is to be sure! Very unlike the late Lady Quorne, my dear. Would you believe it, she drinks in public-houses and plays skittles—curious tastes for a countess, though no doubt it shows geniality and condescension, and all that sort of thing. It's better after all than being stuck up, though I should have thought a countess would have preferred champagne and billiards. However, that's another matter. I was talking of Gaveston. Well, it is bad news, and I'm sorry to be the first to tell you; but it's better to have a pull and get it over. Gaveston had been talking to the dean—and the long and the short of it is, we're to have a new organist. You see they can't afford to

pay an assistant for the sake of giving your father a sinecure."

"They are going to dismiss——"

"No, no, Miss Celia—not quite so bad as that—'dismiss' isn't the word at all. They're going to ask him to resign."

Celia had been expecting the blow; but her heart sank in her. Nothing terrible ever seems quite certain till it comes.

"My father no longer organist!"

"It does sound impossible. It does seem just like going to pull down the cathedral tower. I shouldn't have the heart to do it myself, but then no doubt the dean and chapter wouldn't have the heart to turn off my head clerk if he went blind; and let me tell you that a blind land agent is as bad as a deaf organist any day, and worse."

"No doubt," said Celia, without heeding.

"Now the first thing," said Mr. Swann, "is to get March to resign before he's asked to. The dean's speaking to Gaveston was a sort of a hint in that direction, and a nod's as good as a wink, or ought to be. That's why I say March must go to London. It'll be good reason for leaving Deepweald, and they'll pay him his half-year's notice, or whatever it is, without making bones. No doubt about that. And then the second is, I've got an idea for you. It does go to my heart, Miss Celia, to see March slaving away at his work there, just like a post, when we're talking about this dismiss—resignation. By the Lord Harry, one want's a lot of resignation in this world."

Celia thought so too, and sighed sadly.

"But about my plan for you. Gaveston, my son-in-law, isn't a bad fellow, though I say it, and knows Lady Quorne well—naturally, being his own cousin through the Horchesters. And Lady Quorne is a great musical gun, for all her skittles and beer. My notion is to get Gaveston to mention you to her, or get you an introduction—better still. He says she's half like a foreign singer herself, and she's been on the Continent, like you; so you'll get on famously, or ought to. She's got some singer or other staying with her now, so they say—a queer thing for a countess, but I suppose they have a right to their whims, like other people. Yes, I'll get you an introduction to Lady Quorne."

The organist had not once turned round. He was either completely absorbed in his score or made himself seem so. Well,

indeed, might it go to Mr. Swann's heart to see the musician deafly and blindly toiling on at his work, heedless of the outer world, while at his very back was going on talk about the climax of his ruin.

"You'll know how to manage March," said Mr. Swann; "and I'll know how to manage Bessy, and she'll know how to manage Gaveston if she's her mother's daughter, as I take it she is; and he'll know how to manage Lady Quorne, being her own cousin and a parson into the bargain. Let the parsons alone for managing women—all but their wives. Why, it seems but yesterday I came in at that Dorcas and found fifteen young women making love to him all at once. My Bessy got him though!"

"I—I must do something!" cried out Celia, at last. "I can do something—they said so at Lindenheim. I can't see my father starve for the sake of—even the score. He has let me teach Bessy——"

"Yes, and you may as well send in your account before you go. Send it in to me. Bessy's lessons are my affair. You tell March what I've told you, and I'll see Gaveston to-day. P'raps he'll drive you over himself—if Bessy isn't jealous about his driving a pretty girl all the way to Hinchford. My little grand-daughter keeps her at home, you know. I'd take you myself, but my dealings are with my lord, not my lady, and not much of them; only if it wasn't for me he'd turn all his acres into cucumber-grounds. Good-bye, my dear; keep up your spirits and never say die. That's my motto, all my life, and it's a good one. They say my lady does say dye, though. Good-bye, my dear. I won't disturb March. Give him my respects, and tell him to come and take pot-luck on Sunday."

The standing invitation had remained dormant for a long time; but Mr. Swann's heart had really been touched, and he was one of those who believed that roast beef is a palliation for all ills. And so it is for the ill that was staring the organist in the face now, fairly.

"What has he been saying?" asked John March abruptly, as soon as Mr. Swann had left the room.

Celia wrote—"There—is—to—be—a—new——"

"A new organist? I suppose so. Well—it will give me all the more time for the score."

Could he really believe that manna would be charmed from the skies by toil? It seemed so—even to Celia; that he forgot the forfeiture of his official residence, of the need of bread, and of all earthly things, even as he had forgotten a girl's need of love until to-day. But did even this amount to madness? Biographers of men of genius do not say so. They tell us of Columbus, of Palissy the potter, of Schubert, of Beethoven, of a hundred men who starved that they might feast on an idea. Celia had heard of such things; she was not altogether of Deepweald.

But, if that were so, all the more strongly she felt herself claimed by duty. Now that Mr. Swann was gone, she thought consciously of his suggestion about Lady Quorne—that strange, wild countess, of whose eccentricities all Deepweald, thanks to the wife of the curate of St. Anselm's, was full. She was a musician; and, by her position as an amateur, above the envy which, Celia had learned even at Lindenheim, is the alphabet of the musical profession. To Deepweald ears the very name of the Countess of Quorne was a name of power, and not the less because it had never done anything for the curate of St. Anselm's. If she intervened—somehow—all would be well.

Meanwhile John March returned to his task as if he had only been disturbed for a moment by the buzzing of a fly. Every day the habit of self-concentration grew upon him, until it seemed likely that his house, literally as well as metaphorically, might fall about his deaf ears without his being a whit the wiser.

Celia did not lay before him the name of Lady Quorne. She had already written one "yes" too many, and her pencil refused to run the risk of having to write another. There must be some limit to obedience when a daughter sees her father on the brink of suicide, fanatic and tyrant though he might be.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER V. MISS TALLOWAX IS SHOWN THE HOUSE.

THE dean took his aunt over to Manor Cross in his brougham. The dean's brougham was the neatest carriage in Brotherton, very much more so than the bishop's family carriage. It was, no doubt, generally to be seen with only one horse; and neither the bishop nor Mrs. Barton ever stirred without two; but then one horse is enough for town work, and that one horse could lift his legs and make himself conspicuous, in a manner of which the bishop's rather sorry jades knew nothing. On this occasion, as the journey was long, there were two horses—hired; but, nevertheless, the brougham looked very well as it came up the long Manor Cross avenue. Miss Tallowax became rather frightened, as she drew near to the scene of her coming grandeur.

"Henry," she said to her nephew, "they will think so little of me."

"My dear aunt," replied the dean, "in these days a lady who has plenty of money of her own can hold her head up anywhere. The dear old marchioness will think quite as much of you as you do of her."

What perhaps struck Miss Tallowax most, at the first moment, was the plainness of the ladies' dresses. She herself was rather gorgeous, in a shot-silk gown, and a fashionable bonnet crowded with flowers. She had been ashamed of the splendour of the article as she put it on,

and yet had been ashamed also of her ordinary daily head-gear. But when she saw the marchioness, and especially when she saw Lady Sarah, who was altogether strange to her, she wished that she had come in her customary black gown. She had heard something about Lady Sarah from her niece, and had conceived an idea that Lady Sarah was the dragon of the family. But when she saw a little woman, looking almost as old as herself—though in truth the one might have been the other's mother—dressed in an old brown merino, with the slightest morsel of white collar to be seen round her neck, she began to hope that the dragon would not be very fierce.

"I hope you like Brotherton, Miss Tallowax," said Lady Sarah. "I think I have heard that you were here once before."

"I like Brotherton very much, my lady," Lady Sarah smiled as graciously as she knew how. "I came when they first made Henry dean, a long time ago now it seems. But he had not then the honour of knowing your mamma or the family."

"It wasn't long before we did know him," said the marchioness. Then Miss Tallowax turned round and again curtsied with her head and shoulders.

The dean at this moment was not in the room, having been withdrawn from the ladies by his son-in-law at the front door; but as luncheon was announced, the two men came in. Lord George gave his arm to his wife's great aunt, and the dean followed with the marchioness.

"I really am a'most ashamed to walk out before her ladyship," said Miss Tallowax, with a slight attempt at laughing at her own ignorance.

But Lord George rarely laughed at anything, and certainly did not know how to treat pleasantly such a subject as this. "It's quite customary," he said very gravely.

The lunch was much more tremendous to Miss Tallowax than had been the dinner at the Deanery. Though she was ignorant—ignorant at any rate of the ways of such people as those with whom she was now consorting—she was by no means a stupid old woman. She was soon able to perceive that, in spite of the old merino gown, it was Lady Sarah's spirit that quelled them all. At first there was very little conversation. Lord George did not speak a word. The marchioness never exerted herself. Poor Mary was cowed and unhappy. The dean made one or two little efforts, but without much success. Lady Sarah was intent upon her mutton-chop, which she finished to the last shred, turning it over and over in her plate so that it should be economically disposed of, looking at it very closely, because she was short-sighted. But when the mutton-chop had finally done its duty, she looked up from her plate and gave evident signs that she intended to take upon herself the weight of the conversation. All the subsequent ceremonies of the lunch itself, the little tarts, and the jelly, and the custard pudding, she despised altogether, regarding them as wicked additions. One pudding after dinner she would have allowed, but nothing more of that sort. It might be all very well for parvenu millionaires to have two grand dinners a day, but it could not be necessary that the Germaines should live in that way, even when the Dean of Brotherton and his aunt came to lunch with them.

"I hope you like this part of the country, Miss Tallowax," she said as soon as she had deposited her knife and fork over the bone.

"Manor Cross is quite splendid, my lady," said Miss Tallowax.

"It is an old house, and we shall have great pleasure in showing you what the people call the state-rooms. We never use them. Of course you know the house belongs to my brother, and we only live here because it suits him to stay in Italy."

"That's the young marquis, my lady?"

"Yes; my elder brother is Marquis of Brotherton, but I cannot say that he is very young. He is two years my senior, and ten years older than George."

"But I think he's not married yet?" asked Miss Tallowax.

The question was felt to be disagreeable by them all. Poor Mary could not keep herself from blushing, as she remembered how much to her might depend on this question of her brother-in-law's marriage. Lord George felt that the old lady was enquiring what chance there might be that her grandniece should ever become a marchioness. Old Lady Brotherton, who had always been anxious that her elder son should marry, felt uncomfortable, as did also the dean, conscious that all there must be aware how important must be the matter to him.

"No," said Lady Sarah, with stately gravity; "my elder brother is not yet married. If you would like to see the rooms, Miss Tallowax, I shall have pleasure in showing you the way."

The dean had seen the rooms before, and remained with the old lady. Lord George, who thought very much of everything affecting his own family, joined the party, and Mary felt herself compelled to follow her husband and her aunt. The two younger sisters also accompanied Lady Sarah.

"This is the room in which Queen Elizabeth slept," said Lady Sarah, entering a large chamber on the ground-floor, in which there was a four-post bedstead, almost as high as the ceiling, and looking as though no human body had profaned it for the last three centuries.

"Dear me," said Miss Tallowax, almost afraid to press such sacred boards with her feet. "Queen Elizabeth! Did she really now?"

"Some people say she never did actually come to Manor Cross at all," said the conscientious Lady Amelia; "but there is no doubt the room was prepared for her."

"Laws!" said Miss Tallowax, who began to be less afraid of distant royalty now that a doubt was cast on its absolute presence.

"Examining the evidence as closely as we can," said Lady Sarah, with a savage glance at her sister, "I am inclined to think that she certainly did come. We know that she was at Brotherton in 1582, and there exists the letter in which Sir Humphrey Germaine, as he was then, is desired to prepare rooms for her. I myself have no doubt on the subject."

"After all it does not make much difference," said Mary.

"I think it makes all the difference in

the world," said Lady Susanna. "That piece of furniture will always be sacred to me, because I believe it did once afford rest and sleep to the gracious majesty of England."

"It do make a difference, certainly," said Miss Tallowax, looking at the bed with all her eyes. "Does anybody ever go to bed here now?"

"Nobody, ever," said Lady Sarah. "Now we will go through to the great dining-hall. That's the portrait of the first earl."

"Painted by Kneller," said Lady Amelia, proudly.

"Oh, indeed," said Miss Tallowax.

"There is some doubt as to that," said Lady Sarah. "I have found out that Sir Godfrey Kneller was only born in 1648, and as the first earl died a year or two after the Restoration, I don't know that he could have done it."

"It was always said that it was painted by Kneller," said Lady Amelia.

"There has been a mistake, I fear," said Lady Sarah.

"Oh, indeed," said Miss Tallowax, looking up with intense admiration at a very ill-drawn old gentleman in armour. Then they entered the state dining-room or hall, and Miss Tallowax was informed that the room had not been used for any purpose whatever for very many years. "And such a beautiful room!" said Miss Tallowax, with much regret.

"The fact is, I believe, that the chimney smokes horribly," said Lord George.

"I never remember a fire here," said Lady Sarah. "In very cold weather we have a portable stove brought in, just to preserve the furniture. This is called the old ball-room."

"Dear me!" ejaculated Miss Tallowax, looking round at the faded yellow hangings.

"We did have a ball here once," said Lady Amelia, "when Brotherton came of age. I can just remember it."

"Has it ever been used since?" asked Mary.

"Never," said Lady Sarah. "Sometimes when it's rainy we walk up and down for exercise. It is a fine old house, but I often wish that it were smaller. I don't think people want rooms of this sort now as much as they used to do. Perhaps a time may come when my brother will make Manor Cross gay again, but it is not very gay now. I think that is all, Miss Tallowax."

"It's very fine—very fine, indeed," said

Miss Tallowax, shivering. Then they all trooped back into the morning-room which they used for their daily life.

The old lady, when she had got back into the brougham with her nephew the dean was able to express her mind freely. "I wouldn't live in that house, Henry, not if they was to give it me for nothing."

"They'd have to give you something to keep it up with."

"And not then either. Of course it's all very well having a bed that Queen Elizabeth slept in."

"Or didn't sleep in."

"I'd teach myself to believe she did. But, dear me, that isn't everything. It nearly gave me the horrors to look at it. Room after room—room after room—and nobody living in any of them."

"People can't live in more than a certain number of rooms at once, aunt."

"Then what's the use of having them? And don't you think, for the daughters of a marchioness, they are a little what you'd call—dowdy?"

"They don't go in for dress much."

"Why, my Jemima at home, when the dirty work is done, is twice smarter than Lady Sarah. And, Henry, don't you think they're a little hard upon Mary?"

"Hard upon her; how?" The dean had listened to the old woman's previous criticisms with a smile; but now he was interested and turned sharply round to her. "How, hard?"

"Moping her up there among themselves; and it seemed to me they snubbed her whenever she spoke." The dean had not wanted his aunt's observation to make him feel this. The tone of every syllable addressed to his girl had caught his ear. He had been pleased to marry her into so good a family. He had been delighted to think that, by means of his prosperity in the world, his father's granddaughter might probably become a peeress; but he certainly had not intended that even for such a reward as that his daughter should become submissive to the old maids at Manor Cross. Foreseeing something of this he had stipulated that she should have a house of her own in London; but half her time would probably be spent in the country, and, with reference to that half of her time, it would be necessary that she should be made to understand that, as the wife of Lord George, she was in no respect inferior to his sisters, and that in some respects she was their superior. "I don't see the

good of living in a big house," continued Miss Tallowax, "if all the time everything is to be as dull as dull."

"They are older than she is, you know."

"Poor little dear! I always did say that young folk should have young folk about 'em. Of course it's a great thing for her to have a lord for her husband. But he looks a'most too old himself for such a pretty darling as your Mary."

"He's only thirty-three."

"It's in the looks, I suppose, because he's so grand. But it's that Lady Sarah puzzles me. It isn't in her looks, and yet she has it all her own way. Well; I liked going there, and I'm glad I've been; but I don't know as I shall ever want to go again." Then there was silence for some time; but as the brougham was driven into Brotherton Miss Tallowax spoke again. "I don't suppose an old woman like me can ever be of any use, and you'll always be at hand to look after her. But if ever she should want an outing, just to raise her spirits, old as I am, I think I could make it brighter for her than it is there." The dean took her hand and pressed it, and then there was no more said.

When the brougham was driven away Lord George took his wife for a walk in the park. She was still struggling hard to be in love with him, never owning failure to herself, and sometimes assuring herself that she had succeeded altogether. Now, when he asked her to come with him, she put on her hat joyfully, and joined her hands over his arm as she walked away with him into the shrubbery.

"She's a wonderful old woman; is not she, George?"

"Not very wonderful."

"Of course you think she's vulgar."

"I didn't say so."

"No; you're too good to say so because she's papa's aunt. But she's very good. Don't you think she's very good?"

"I daresay she is. I don't know that I run into superlatives quite as much as you do."

"She has brought me such a handsome present. I could not show it you before them all just now, and it only came down from London this morning. She did not say a word about it before. Look here." Then she slipped her glove off and showed him a diamond ring.

"You should not wear that out of doors."

"I only put it on to show you. Wasn't it good of her? 'Young people of rank ought to wear nice things,' she said, as she gave it me. Wasn't it an odd thing for her to say? and yet I understood her." Lord George frowned, thinking that he also understood the old woman's words, and reminding himself that the ladies of rank at Manor Cross never did wear nice things. "Don't you think it was nice?"

"Of course she is entitled to make you a present if she pleases."

"It pleased me, George."

"I daresay, and as it doesn't displease me all is well. You, however, have quite sense enough to understand that in this house more is thought of—of—of—" he would have said blood, but that he did not wish to hurt her—"more is thought of personal good conduct than of rings and jewels."

"Rings and jewels, and—personal conduct may go together; mayn't they?"

"Of course they may."

"And very often do. You won't think my—personal conduct—will be injured because I wear my aunt's ring?"

When Lord George made his allusion to personal conduct one of her two hands dropped from his arm, and now, as she repeated the words, there was a little sting of sarcasm in her voice.

"I was intending to answer your aunt's opinion that young people ought to wear nice things. No doubt there is at present a great rage for rich ornaments and costly dress, and it was of these she was thinking when she spoke of nice things. When I spoke of personal conduct being more thought of here, I intended to imply that you had come into a family not given to rich ornaments and costly dress. My sisters feel that their position in this world is assured to them without such outward badges, and wish that you should share the feeling."

This was a regular sermon, and to Mary's thinking was very disagreeable, and not at all deserved. Did her husband really mean to tell her that, because his sisters chose to dress themselves down in the country like dowdy old maids whom the world had deserted, she was to do the same up in London? The injustice of this on all sides struck home to her at the moment. They were old, and she was young. They were plain; she was pretty. They were poor; she was rich. They didn't feel any wish to make themselves

what she called "nice." She did feel a very strong wish in that direction. They were old maids; she was a young bride. And then what right had they to domineer over her, and to send word to her through her husband of their wishes as to her manner of dressing? She said nothing at the moment; but she became red, and began to feel that she had power within her to rebel at any rate against her sisters-in-law. There was silence for a moment or so, and then Lord George reverted to the subject.

"I hope you can sympathise with my sisters," he said. He had felt that the hand had been dropped, and had understood something of the reason.

She wished to rebel against them, but by no means wished to oppose him. She was aware, as though by instinct, that her life would be very bad indeed should she fail to sympathise with him. It was still the all-paramount desire of her heart to be in love with him. But she could not bring herself to say that she sympathised with them, in this direct attack that was made on her own mode of thought.

"Of course, they are a little older than I am," she said, hoping to get out of the difficulty.

"And therefore the more entitled to consideration. I think you will own that they must know what is, and what is not, becoming to a lady."

"Do you mean," said she, hardly able to choke a rising sob, "that they—have anything—to find fault with in me?"

"I have said nothing as to finding fault, Mary."

"Do they think that I do not dress as I ought to do?"

"Why should you ask such a question as that?"

"I don't know what else I am to understand, George. Of course I will do anything that you tell me. If you wish me to make any change, I will make it. But I hope they won't send me messages through you."

"I thought you would have been glad to know that they interested themselves about you." In answer to this Mary pouted, but her husband did not see the pout.

"Of course they are anxious that you should become one of them. We are a very united family. I do not speak now of my elder brother, who is in a great measure separated from us, and is of a

different nature. But my mother, my sisters, and I, have very many opinions in common. We live together, and have the same way of thinking. Our rank is high, and our means are small. But to me blood is much more than wealth. We acknowledge, however, that rank demands many sacrifices, and my sisters endeavour to make those sacrifices conscientiously. A woman more thoroughly devoted to good works than Sarah I have never even read of. If you will believe this, you will understand what they mean, and what I mean, when we say that here at Manor Cross we think more of personal conduct than of rings and jewels. You wish, Mary, to be one of us; do you not?"

She paused for a moment, and then she answered, "I wish to be always one with you."

He almost wanted to be angry at this, but it was impossible. "To be one with me, dearest," he said, "you must be one also with them."

"I cannot love them as I do you, George. That, I am sure, is not the meaning of being married." Then she thought of it all steadily for a minute, and after that made a further speech. "And I don't think I can quite dress like them. I'm sure you would not like it if I did."

As she said this she put her second hand back upon his arm.

He said nothing further on the subject until he had brought her back to the house, walking along by her side almost mute, not quite knowing whether he ought to be offended with her or to take her part. It was true that he would not have liked her to look like Lady Sarah, but he would have liked her to make some approach in that direction, sufficient to show submission. He was already beginning to fear the absence of all control which would befall his young wife in that London life to which she was to be so soon introduced, and was meditating whether he could not induce one of his sisters to accompany them. As to Sarah, he was almost hopeless. Amelia would be of little or no service, though she would be more likely to ingratiate herself with his wife than the others. Susanna was less strong than Sarah and less amiable than Amelia. And then, how would it be if Mary were to declare that she would rather begin the campaign without any of them?

The young wife, as soon as she found herself alone in her own bedroom, sat

down and resolved that she would never allow herself to be domineered over by her husband's sisters. She would be submissive to him in all things, but his authority should not be delegated to them.

WANTED PARTICULARLY.

SOME persons are "wanted" by the police, for reasons which magistrates may be ready to explain, and which will not be wholly satisfactory to the individuals enquired after. But people are also wanted, not belonging to the bad lot: the rightful owners—if they only knew it—of more or less of this world's goods. Heirs-at-law, next of kin, legatees, creditors, representatives in chancery suits, &c., are advertised for in the newspapers every day; not to come forward to give evidence damaging to themselves, but to claim something which belongs to them. Custodians for the time being of funds not belonging to themselves are desirous of getting rid of the responsibilities of trusteeship, executorship, and the like, and make use of the publicity of the press to aid them. A correspondent of *The Times* has recently given some curious pickings from that journal on the subject.

The number of these advertisements appearing in the great newspapers is occasionally as few as a hundred and thirty per month, sometimes as many as two hundred, averaging probably about a hundred and sixty, and mentioning the names of six or seven hundred persons. From the nature of the subject it follows that these persons include the past owners of the property waiting to be appropriated, and relations more or less near of kin whose names are known. Sometimes the Crown, to which the ownership of property falls in the absence of any other known owner, advertises to that effect, through the solicitor to the Treasury; the sum may be so small as to be hardly worth trying for, but in one case, which occurred last year, it reached the very tempting amount of a hundred and forty thousand pounds. The Lord Chancellor, the official protector of children, wards, heiresses, &c., under a great variety of circumstances, is frequently found among the advertisers for next of kin. He wished recently to ferret out the representatives of a baronet who died a century and a half ago; and, in another instance, those of a husband and

wife whose wedding-day occurred during the reign of Queen Anne.

Other official personages and bodies are in like manner occasionally under the need of advertising for next of kin. The Bank of England wants some one or other to come forward, and assist in a re-transfer of unclaimed stock as dividends in the hands of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt. One of the High Courts of Justice seeks for information concerning the descendants of a lady who died at the age of ninety-four, early in the present century. Sundry charitable institutions are invited to come forward as the rightful owners of certain bequeathed sums of money.

As may well be expected, many of the difficulties arise from persons having gone to sea, and having "not since been heard of." One instance is that of a man who went to sea twenty-two years ago, and who is entitled, if he be in the land of the living and can prove himself to be so, to a certain residuary estate; while another, whose departure from England took place five years later, "may hear of something greatly to his advantage." Tidings of a person reported to have been drowned in the Merrimac river, forty-five years ago, "will be liberally paid for." The relations of two brothers who were drowned at Montreal are enquired for. A Prussian gentleman, whose name is given, is supposed to have fallen overboard, or to have jumped into the sea, while on board a vessel bound for Mexico. "Being an expert swimmer, he may have been picked up by a passing vessel; if alive, he is implored to make known his whereabouts."

Emigrants, of course, figure largely in the list, either as persons who left property behind them, or as next of kin to whom property is due. In one instance claimants for land in Canada are enquired for; in another, a person, last heard of in Queensland, is entitled to the residuary estate of his brother. Some of the cases are remarkable for the great length of time over which the genealogy or consanguinity has to be investigated. An instance in point is an enquiry for the next of kin of persons who held shares in the West New Jersey Society so far back as a hundred and seventy-eight years ago; certain funds are at their disposal. Still older by nine years is the case of a person who emigrated to America; heirs are wanted in this instance for no less a sum than two millions sterling. Who has had

the handling of the money, or the benefit of the investment, ever since the time of Charles the Second, we are not told.

Certificates of birth, marriage, and death are frequently advertised for, as clues to further enquiries concerning heirs-at-law. A reward of two hundred and fifty pounds is offered for any clue to a marriage settlement, by the relatives of a testator, who, on his death-bed, could only utter the words, "Lincoln's Inn Fields." What might not a skilful novelist make of this extraordinary bit of mystery?

Other applications for heirs-at-law or next of kin are so miscellaneous as to admit of no particular classification; they may be accepted as samples of a very curious and diversified budget. A gentleman in distressed circumstances seeks the representatives of a firm who carried on business in Calcutta sixty years ago. The descendants of a family are required to claim twelve thousand pounds. Enquiry is made for any existing representative of a family living eighty years ago. A father affectionately enquires for a runaway daughter, "who will learn with regret that her mother died recently." A son, who left his home a quarter of a century ago, has been informed, in an advertisement which has appeared at least twenty times, that something greatly to his advantage awaits him. Enquiry is made, not for a particular person, but for information concerning the investments or other property of a gentleman deceased. An expectant legatee is willing to pay handsomely for a clue to some funds, supposed to have been deposited in a bank. A labourer is enquired for to whom a legacy has been left; and several domestic servants are in like good luck. The relatives of a captain, who died suddenly, are requested to communicate with the clergyman of a specified parish. Several sums of money are mentioned for which owners are wanted; while in one instance the relatives of a deceased person would be glad to know the whereabouts of a particular sum of two hundred pounds. A sister will hear of something to her advantage on communicating with her brother. A gunner who deserted from Her Majesty's service, fifteen years ago, is entitled to property under a probate case, or his next of kin if the gunner be dead. Under the Lunacy Regulation Act, advertisements are frequently issued for the representatives of persons of unsound mind. A lady entitled to a legacy left

by her sister is not an uncommon occurrence; but in one instance the advertiser describes the fortunate lady-legatee as having had no fewer than four husbands. Any persons "who think they have a right to the inheritance" of a Spanish spinster, who died at the age of eighty-four, are invited to apply. A gentleman who seems to have had a knack for changing his place of residence, without the desirable accompaniment of paying his debts, left behind him the means of clearing off encumbrances, or else his representatives take that duty upon themselves; his creditors are invited to send in their claims, and his past ubiquity is denoted by describing him as of Woolwich in Kent, Norwood in Surrey, Westbourne Grove, Camberwell, Dover in Kent, and Boulogne-sur-Mer. Two sons are wanted to claim an estate left to them by their father. The father of a child, left under the guardianship of a nurse, is informed that his daughter has died suddenly, to the great grief of the nurse. A person who left Wales twenty years ago is informed that he is entitled to one-third of two farms. A surplus awaits division among the owners of certain slaughter-houses and meat-salesmen's premises, in the neighbourhood of what was till recently Newgate Market. One J. B. is informed that "he has been adjudged bankrupt, and may return home without molestation"—a fact which we hope may prove a solace to him. A lady, rejoicing in the almost unpronounceable name of Zakezewski, and by profession a physician, is wanted with reference to a very important family affair. Unexpected assets of very large amount await the representatives of the creditors of a gentleman who died so long back as a hundred and thirty-five years ago. Whether it would apply equally to Betsy Baker, Barbara Burton, Beatrice Brown, Bertha Blundell, Biddy Brallagan, Blanche Barlow, Bridget Brooks, we are not told; but one advertisement seeks for information concerning a servant whose initials are B. B.; her sister will gratefully thank any lady who can give any news of the said B. B.

So important have advertisements of this kind become, that a work of formidable magnitude has been accomplished in collecting and arranging them. Lists have been made out from time to time, in some instances relating to a particular year, in some to a particular newspaper, and in others again to a specified class of subjects.

These lists have been brought together, and supplemented by a vast amount of research; the files of newspapers have been ransacked, copies of advertisements written out, duplications and repetitions weeded, alphabetical lists of surnames drawn up, and a particular number attached to every advertisement. The result appears in Mr. Chambers's Index to Advertisements for Heirs-at-Law, Next of Kin, Legatees, Missing Friends, Encumbrances, Creditors, Representatives in Chancery Suits, &c. Three or four editions of the work have been issued, and we may fairly assume that the chief purchasers are solicitors, conveyancers, and the like. A more unreadable book, in itself, can hardly be imagined, page after page of numerals and surnames, with nothing concerning the "life, character, and behaviour" of the individuals referred to. Everything that can be ferreted out and brought together for the last hundred and fifty years is here collected, arranged in the alphabetical order of surnames. One entry may consist, say, of "21476, Martindale, Robert," nothing more. Who Robert Martindale was; when he lived and died; what is the meaning of 21476; in what newspaper, and at what date, the advertisement appeared; and what is the nature of the property which is seeking an owner, are questions which the volume leaves unanswered. A slight additional information is given in cases where several persons have exactly the same surname and christian-name, just sufficient to give one end of a clue. Thus, there are several John Smiths, each the hero of one particular advertisement; to distinguish them one from another, a word or so is appended to each—such as York; Middlesex; died abroad; yeoman; Treasury; army-surgeon; Ireland; Scotland; son of Hannah; Islington; seaman; Worcester; farmer; Willesden Hill; merchant; legatee; Gibraltar. Among several Mary Browns, the distinctive words are Lincoln; daughter of James; Cambridge; Mrs. (Middlesex); widow; Sydney; late butcher; London; Ann; Anne (Surrey).

As all indexes are valuable in proportion to the readiness of the means of reference to the work referred to, so is the index to heirs-at-law really of service only to those who can get hold of its compiler; for he, and he only, possesses the key to the various solutions. He is ready to furnish actual copies of the advertisements, or the dates and names of newspapers where they

are to be found. If a number and a name, as entered in the index, become a subject of further enquiry, he refers to other documents in his own keeping, which enable him to identify them with a particular advertisement. He can give information more or less complete, either in the form of verbatim copies of advertisements, or by a specific reference to the particular newspaper where it appeared in print. Sometimes the information sought, is simply whether a person of a particular name is probably the same as one of the persons named in the index; leaving for further enquiry all particulars concerning the property that is waiting for an owner. Besides the index, the compiler has in his possession a large budget of information relating to persons who have died intestate in America, India, Australia, and other foreign or colonial countries. These services are unlocked by means of the same gold and silver keys which unlock so many other treasures in the world.

Several public establishments have at all times vast sums of money under their charge, not belonging to themselves, and yet not distributable, because the rightful owners are either unknown or unreachable. The Court of Chancery is the holder of more than sixty millions sterling, suitors' stock and cash, of which a large portion awaits claimants. Another sum of notable amount is in the hands of the Bank of England, in the shape of unclaimed dividends; nearly a million sterling of this is interest or dividends on the funds constituting the National Debt, and is, we believe, placed at the disposal of the Government until claimants appear, although the Bank is still the trustee so far as the public are concerned. It may well appear surprising to many of us, that a sum of no less than a million and a half sterling is waiting to be claimed by soldiers and sailors, or their representatives, in the form of prize-money. So much routine and red tape are concerned in determining the distribution of prize-money or bounty among a large number of men, that many of the poor fellows die off before their share is ready for them; and then the War Office and the Admiralty do not well know what to do with the money, unless some representatives of the deceased men come forward. There is a sum of money always in the hands of the Admiralty, representing the wages and small personal belongings of seamen who have died, and whose representatives are not known

to the Government; John Bull owes something to Jack Tar, and is ready to pay if he knows to whom to hand over the money.

There is another class of wants, every day the subject of advertisements in the newspapers, more closely connected with the feelings than with the pocket. These emanate from persons who are temporarily separated from friends by domestic and other causes. Wives appealing to runaway husbands; fathers who offer forgiveness to scapegrace sons; parents who fear that an absent daughter is on the road to ruin, which a paternal home may possibly prevent from becoming ruin absolute; sisters who beseech a brother to return to a domestic hearth, which his absence has made desolate and miserable—all these appeals are to be met with in the "agony column" of *The Times*; but the curious matters treated in this article are of a more prosaic kind; prosaic, nevertheless, in a way highly satisfactory to some or other of the persons immediately concerned.

A LAST GLASS OF WINE.

HOLD it up, higher yet, and nearer to the light, the liquid ruby of the Gascon grape, and as the ruddy glow gleams through the brimming crystal, eye it lovingly, yet with a soft regret, for we shall look upon its like no more. Madeira is gone, and claret must follow, to the limbo of the lost. Already, from the frontiers of Italy to the borders of Spain, they are tearing up the useless vines, and breaching the walls of long-respected vineyards. Hot Languedoc, sunny Provence, are now as bare of their most cherished crop, as are the bleakest plains of the *Sologne*, or the wildest heath in *Brittany*. And the vine-plague spreads and spreads, unchecked, unstemmed, by all that industry and science can effect. How serious is the evil can be measured only by the recollection, that seven million French depend for daily bread on the now perishing vine.

The cause of all this mischief is a little insect of American origin, which is reputed to have been accidentally brought over to Paris by the *Acclimatisation Society*. Be this as it may, that terrible importation, the *phylloxera*, has fixed its habitat but too firmly in the country of its adoption. It devours tender branch and slender stem,

green leaf and juicy tendril; and having lived for billions of generations on the wild vines of the transatlantic forest, it has come at last to flesh its microscopic teeth on the nascent vintage of plants, the mellow life-blood of which has mantled in the golden goblets of old kings, and the silver hanaps of mighty merchants of long ago. Nature's own open-air laboratory, whence came the cool claret of our grandfathers, the contents of the cobwebbed magnum, the "yellow seal" and the "green seal," of *Meg Dods*, and similar old-fashioned landladies, cannot bar out the American invader, and must yield, body and soul, to the inroad of the imperious insect.

The vine-growers made a brave fight. Warned by their experience of the *oidium*, that fell blight which had been to them what the potato disease was to the *Island of Saints*, they presented no inert phalanx to the enemy. They called chemist and engineer to the rescue. The *phylloxera* could be poisoned. Quick! let sulphuret of carbon by the hogshead, sulpho-carbonate of potash by the ton, be sprinkled over tainted leaf and bough. The *phylloxera* could be drowned. Snatch the spade, then, and cut channels through which water from the river, the mountain torrent, anything, may run, to flood the vineyard. Make irrigation-canals; build dam and weir; submerge the district, so that the last of the baleful brood may perish utterly. The contagion may be checked. Yes, let vines be grubbed up and burned, and girdle the place with fire, and sow the soil with salt, and sprinkle it with quicklime and chlorates, and establish a sanitary cordon, through which no insect, or insect's egg, can pass!

In vain. All in vain. The *phylloxera* was too mighty for chemist, and engineer, and husbandman, to grapple with. His legions laughed at their strategy. He burrowed through the soil, and, tiny sapper and miner that he was, made his unseen approaches to the tough roots of the great vines. He tunnelled beneath the bark, worked his hidden way to where his prey awaited him, and battered on the young shoots and budding leaves. Government commissions found him a troublesome rebel, more irreconcilable than any communist. Even the patient research of the naturalist, microscope in hand, has failed to find out anything to the *phylloxera's* disadvantage. Of what use is it to kill

him by millions? So rapid is his reproduction, that myriads spring into life where but a germ is left. Chemicals are wasted on him. Frost does but levy a poll-tax on his numbers. Starvation only must bring about the extermination of the phylloxera.

Many remedies have been tried. That quick eyes and sharp little bills might make short work with him, the French vine-dresser has shown an unusual tolerance to small birds, and American insects that eat the phylloxera have been imported to thin the ranks of the hereditary quarry. American grape-vines, too, have been brought in, and for a time the grim insect has declined to touch them. But the American vines, the grapes of which never gave such must as that which foams crimson in French vats, soon acquired a Gallic delicacy, that made them toothsome to the destroyer, and they too were stripped to bare poles. Throughout the chief wine-producing regions of France, the puny foe has triumphed, and the principal product of the rich South seems doomed to absolute extinction.

One glance at the map will show over how wide an area this insect Attila has carried havoc and ruin. From Béziers to the Rhone the villages are half unpeopled, the labourers having wandered away in search of work where there are yet vines to trim and grapes to crush. The peasant proprietors have torn up the ugly stubs of their once sacred vines, and are at their wits' end to know by what crop they can replace them. For the plant of Bacchus loves a stony, arid soil of crumbling limestone, unfit for wheat or beetroot, for tobacco or maize, and where neither roots nor grain can well be cultivated. Hérault and Gard are desolate, and in the Bordeaux country a desperate struggle has for six years been maintained between the phylloxera and the wine-grower, in which the indomitable insect slowly and surely wins. The exporters of La Rochelle shake their heads over the dismal news from the banks of the Charente, where the strong, full-bodied wines from which costliest cognac was distilled, shall fill the giant vats with purple foam no more. Brandy, henceforth, may be made from malt or molasses, or at best, from the dusky grape-juice of Aragon, but from French wine, its legitimate parent, it can hardly, in the lifetime of this generation, be made.

It is with something of a shudder, that the lover of good living learns that the

phylloxera has broken into Burgundy, that the minor growths are suffering from his remorseless appetite, and that the grand old vineyards, every one of which is more valuable than a coal-mine, are in hourly risk of being invaded. The sword of Damocles swings by a flimsy thread over such properties as that of glorious Clos Vougeot, the exact history of which, thanks to the carefully kept registers of its monkish proprietors, we know, and which has been a vineyard for nine hundred and seventy years. Champagne is as yet intact, and perhaps some respite may be given to the sparkling growths of Ay and Epernay, while the sour petit bleu of the north-central departments has not been affected by the prevailing plague.

Deplorable as is the loss to French agriculture and commerce, some consolation might be felt by the consumer, could he but believe that the worst of the evil was known or guessed. Claret, champagne, and Burgundy might become mournful memories, while sherry, hock, port, and the cheaper wines of Hungary, Italy, and Spain did their best to replace them. But the phylloxera respects no frontiers. The most stringent cordon of Custom-house officers would fail to shut him out. Already, in the summer of 1876, the insect pest has made its unwelcome appearance in southern Switzerland. The vines of the Jura and the Vand are now exposed to the ravages of the same devourers that have wasted Languedoc and spoiled Provence; while alarmists already predict the day when, from the Rhine to the Bosphorus, there shall not remain a wine-press at work, or a vineyard otherwise than ragged and bare, with yellowed leaves and drooping bines.

There are, fortunately, other quarters of the world whence wine can come to gladden the hearts of consumers stinted of their familiar beverage. America and Australia, under the stimulus of commercial competition, could no doubt fill our cellars with something choicer than Catawba and Geelong. Cape growths might improve, and even Fiji produce a malmsey comparable to the royal nectar of antique Madeira. But if London and Paris are to run after strangely-called vintages, pains must be taken to render the liquor fit for civilised palates. The traditions of a trade, like those of the fine arts, do not grow up, like Jack's wondrous beanstalk, in a night; and, in addition to capital and science, the patient, loving skill of the

European vine-dresser and wine-grower will have to be called into requisition, before the New World can restore the balance of the Old.

THE BURIED CHIME.

UNDER the cliffs at Whitby, when the great tides
landward flow,
Under the cliffs at Whitby, when the great winds
landward blow,
When the long billows heavily roll o'er the harbour
bar,
And the blue waves flash to silver, 'mid the seaweeds
on the Scar,
When the low thunder of the surf calls down the
hollow shore,
And 'mid the caves at Kettleness, the baffled breakers
roar;
Under the cliffs at Whitby, who so will stand alone,
Where in the shadow of the Nab, the eddies swirl
and moan,
When to the pulses of the deep, the flood tide rising
swells,
Will hear amid its monotone, the clash of hidden
bells.
Up from the heart of ocean the mellow music peals,
Where the sunlight makes his golden path, and the
sea-mew flits and wheels.
For many a chequered century, untired by flying
time,
The bells, no human fingers touch, have rung their
hidden chime,
Since the gallant ship that brought them, for the
abbey on the height,
Struck and foundered in the offing, with her sacred
goal in sight.
And the man who dares on Hallowe'en, on the black
Nab to watch,
Till the rose-light on St. Hilda's shrine, the midnight
moonbeams catch,
And calls his sweetheart by her name, as o'er the
sleeping seas
The echo of the buried bells comes floating on the
breeze,
Ere another moon on Hallowe'en, her eerie rays has
shed,
Will hear his wedding peal ring out, from the church
tower on the head.

THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"No, gentlemen," said our skipper, flinging his dripping sou'-wester through the open door of his private cabin, and wringing the water from his thick beard and moustache, as he clawed his way along the backs of the carefully lashed and cleated benches, to where we were seated at the cuddy-table of the Queen of the Baltic. "No, gentlemen, I'm sorry to spoil sport, 'specially such an evening as this; but I can't have any of that aboard of my ship. Anything to oblige, in reason, you know. We'll screw down the valves, if you like, and see what her plates 'll stand; or you can go below into the spirit-room and play

pitch-and-toss with a box of lucifer-matches, and I'll have the donkey rigged, and the hose stretched along, and chance it. But I've had one lesson off just such another little infernal machine as you've got there, and please the Lord I don't want another."

It was certainly, as the captain said, the sort of evening that might excuse a good deal in the way of any attempt at mitigating its horrors. I have been at sea often enough when it was blowing "great guns," but now, for the last hour and more, it had been, as the skipper himself acknowledged, blowing regular Woolwich infants. The "wild and stormy steep" of Elsinore—about as flat and low-lying a piece of coast, by-the-way, as any within my acquaintance—lay under our lee, only a very few miles off, as we knew, but fairly hidden from sight by the low, driving clouds, that seemed to touch our very mast-heads, and press the thick black smoke from the funnels right down upon our streaming deck. The muddy sea, too shallow for an honest ocean roll, too much "humbugged about," as our growling old sea-dog of a quartermaster phrased it, by contrary sets and currents, to run steadily in any one direction, tumbled and foamed, and deluged us every moment fore and aft, now from this side, now from that, as the long narrow steamer, loaded "within an inch of her life" with railway metals, lurched and plunged as though each staggering dive would be her last. We had stayed on deck till we were fairly washed off it, and since then had beguiled the time as best we might in the cuddy, from which even such daylight as was to be had outside was excluded by the heavy tarpaulin nailed and battened down over the skylight, that had already been partially stove-in by one unusually spiteful sea. The lamps had been lighted; an extra stove, carefully secured, and with one of the crew told off to mount special guard over it, slung in the forward part of the cabin, where the water had come in most freely. The usual embargo upon smoking below-deck had been taken off, and everything done to make existence as endurable as under the circumstances was in any way possible. Still it was more or less the pursuit of pleasure under difficulties, and when one of our number suddenly remembered that he had a toy roulette on board, and offered to start a bank with a five-shilling maximum, the proposal was hailed with delight by the whole party.

We had just made our game for the

first time. The little ball had been started upon its travels, and the inevitable lurch had straightway sent it, with cylinder, stakes, and players, pell-mell into the lee scuppers, where two or three of the more enthusiastic of the latter were still chasing errant shillings and sixpences, whilst the rest of us were engaged in an animated discussion as to the best means of avoiding a similar catastrophe in the future, when a louder howl than usual from without gave notice that the door of the companion had been opened for a moment, and, amid a hissing shower of salt-white spray, the captain made his appearance amongst us.

"Very sorry, gentlemen, I am indeed," he repeated, as a pretty general chorus of remonstrance greeted him, as it seemed, rather arbitrary veto upon our anticipated distraction. "I am not an unaccommodating kind of chap, now, am I, gentlemen? And when I ask you as a favour——"

"Say no more, captain," cried the owner of the roulette, turning the little cylinder bottom upward in token of surrender. "You have treated us well, and if you put it in that way—— But tell us, now, what makes you so set against my poor little wheel here. Did you ever try your hand at it?"

"No, sir," answered the skipper, slowly. "I never did, and, please God, I never will. But that little wheel—or the twin-brother of it—lost me the best friend I ever had, and the finest ship I ever sailed in. If you gentlemen like to hear about it, it's a bit clearer now, and I can leave the deck for a quarter of an hour or so, I don't mind telling you the story."

"Hear, hear! The yarn, captain, by all means. Steward! a glass of grog here for the captain."

Captain Walderson smiled, took a long slow pull at his grog with a thoughtful air, and began his story.

"It's four-and-twenty years ago I'm speaking of, gentlemen—four-and-twenty years come the seventeenth of this month, and a black day that's been in my calendar ever since. I was a youngster then, as you may suppose; in fact, it was my first voyage to sea, and very nigh it was to being my last, as you shall hear.

"I think I've heard you say, sir," he went on, turning to me, "that you were in Port Philip—that's Victoria they call it now—in 1852? And no doubt but you'll recollect the little hundreds of vessels there was lying there rotting in

Hudson's Bay because they couldn't get crews to take them home?"

I nodded assent.

"You don't happen to remember, perhaps, one very fine ship among them, pretty nigh the biggest there she was, called the Helen Macdonald?"

"Do you mean," I asked, after a moment's consideration, "a ship of about two thousand tons, painted all black? There was some story about the steward having lived on board of her all alone for twelve months and more?"

"That's her, sir. No gentleman with any eye for a ship could miss her. One of the first of the Aberdeen clippers she was, and a real beauty as ever I saw. Old Dowman—that's the steward—he was the only man left on board her when captain, and officers, and crew all ran for the diggings, and he lived on board of her all alone for pretty nigh another year after you knew her, and never set foot on shore but twice all the time.

"Well, sir, you may suppose our owners didn't care about having their finest ship, and she on her maiden voyage too, lying there rotting at her anchors, and they sent old Dowman out word to get her home, at pretty well any price. But, Lord bless you! hands weren't to be got there for love or money. Many's the ordinary seaman has asked and got one hundred pounds for the run home, and many a hundred have turned up their noses at the offer and gone off to Ballarat with their picks over their shoulders, to die, in a mouldy hole, of drink and dysentery like the fools they were. And the Helen Macdonald wasn't like one of your small craft, or even like one of the old tea-waggons that you might bring round the Horn with a man and a boy if you'd only got biscuit enough on board, and didn't mind a few weevils in it. There was no heaving her to of a night and turning in, making quite sure you'd find her there in the morning. Five-and-thirty or forty hands she'd take to handle her at the least, and there'd need be some seamen among them too.

"At last the owners had pretty well given up all hopes of her, when one day, just as Mr. Baldwin—that's the senior partner—was leaving the office in Fenchurch-street, one of the mates in the employ came in and asked to see him on most particular business.

"Well, my lad," says he, putting on his great-coat all the time, 'what is it?'

"I think, sir," says the mate, 'that if

you'll trust the job to me, I can get home the Helen Macdonald for you right away.'

"Mr. Baldwin stopped short, with the velvet collar of his coat all up about his ears, and stared at him for a moment, as if not quite sure that he mightn't have been drinking a little.

"The devil you do," said he.

"Yes, sir," says poor Harry Corbett; 'I've been thinking it over for some time now, and, if so be you're agreeable, I think I can have her in the East India Docks within seven months from this time, and not cost very much neither.'

"Mr. Baldwin turned down his collar, took off his hat, and sat down. He knew something of Harry Corbett, who had the name of being one of the smartest young fellows in the employ, and there was something in his way of speaking that showed he'd got a notion in his head.

"What's your plan?" said he.

"It's this, sir," said Harry; "you've sent out men already for her I know, and they've cut and run as soon as ever they got their foot on Liardet's Beach. But it seems to me that the plan's never been tried fairly yet."

"Ah! Indeed?"

"No, sir; I think—begging your pardon—you've made two mistakes. In the first place, you should have picked your men instead of taking pretty well any you could get. In the second place, you should never have let them set foot on shore at all."

"And how would you prevent it?"

"Well, sir, my notion is this: you know old Dowman writes that small craft sell very well out there for the coasting-trade. Now, sir, if you'll give me a handy little brig of say a hundred and fifty or two hundred tons, I'll pick up a crew, half of steady old hands that won't want to run, and half of young apprentices that won't be up to it just at first. We'll write word to old Dowman, to get his papers ready, and keep his house-flag flying. I'll take the brig in early in the morning, lay her right alongside of the Helen, clap the men on board, and get her and them fairly outside the Heads before night comes on."

"Mr. Baldwin sat for a minute or two thinking.

"There's something in your idea, Corbett," he said at last. 'Look in again tomorrow at two o'clock, and we'll talk about it. Who is that lad with you?'

"He's the son of an old friend of mine, sir, that was lost at sea three years ago, and I'm looking after him a bit. I

was thinking, if I went, of taking him with me.'

"All right. You couldn't do better. Remember—two o'clock. Good-day.' And as we went out Mr. Baldwin rang his bell, and sent for his managing clerk to talk the matter over with him.

"Well, gentlemen, I need not tell you that, when we went back next day, we found everything settled. Mr. Baldwin was already in negotiation for the purchase of a very smart little brig, that had been lying in the West India Docks for sale for some weeks past, and the letter of instructions to old Dowman on board the Helen Macdonald was lying on his table awaiting his signature when we were shown in. That same afternoon all arrangements were concluded, and before a fortnight had passed we were working down Channel in the teeth of a stiffish sou'-wester, with as much beef and biscuit on board as would victual the big ship for her voyage home, without having to send so much as a boat ashore till we sighted the Foreland lights again.

"That was something like a run out. We had five-and-forty hands on board, all told—a regular man-of-war's crew, and we carried on man-of-war fashion, I can tell you. You don't often see a merchant craft reef topsails in stays; but in our bit of a cockle-shell—barely one hundred and twenty tons she was—five-and-forty men could do pretty well what they pleased; and with a smart fellow like poor Harry Corbett in command, you may depend upon it the little brig soon learned to do everything but speak. It was in just sixty-seven days and eight hours, from leaving our moorings at Gravesend, that we sighted Port Philip Head. All that night we lay to outside, as poor Harry had proposed, and with daylight we ran in, picked up our pilot, and before noon had brought the brig to an anchor close alongside the Helen Macdonald.

"In three hours more the stock had been got on board; the Helen's topsails were sheeted home, the anchor short stay apeak—we had to unshackle one of the cables to get the turns out—and all ready for a start; when just at the last moment we discovered that one of the boats was missing, and that, in spite of everything, a dozen of our best hands had taken the 'fever,' and fairly given us the slip.

"For a few minutes things looked a little ugly. Some of the men who were left objected to putting to sea what they

called short-handed, and wanted the captain at all events to wait over the night, and see if the deserters could not be got back. A still more serious remonstrance was made, though privately, by the boat-swain, a thorough seaman, and steady as old Time, who took poor Harry aside and warned him that, after being neglected for more than two years, the Helen's gear was anything but trustworthy.

But Harry knew what lying there for the night meant.

"Before daylight to-morrow, Ben," he said, "the Helen's fore-castle would be just as empty as it was this morning."

"And old Ben shook his head, and admitted that it was so.

"So Harry made the men a little speech; promised to divide the wages of the deserters among them; served out an extra ration of grog, and before sundown the second anchor was swinging from the catheads, and the Helen Macdonald was fairly on her way homewards. So determined, indeed, was he not to run the risk of losing any more hands, that, though it had fallen dark before we got to the Heads, he wouldn't even wait till morning to cross the bar, but took her straight out without so much as heaving to. As we drew fairly outside, and beyond danger, he drew a long deep breath, stood quite silent for nearly a minute, then gave me a slap on the shoulder that nearly knocked me off the break of the poop on to the main deck, and said:

"We've done it, Teddy, my boy, and my fortune's made—and yours too!"

"Then, springing into the mizen rigging, he took off his cap and sang out at the top of his voice:

"Hurrah! my lads. Three cheers for Old England and double wages!"

"The men had been a bit sulky up to that time, not quite liking the being carried off to sea again quite so sharply, even though they had signed for it in their articles. But they got all right now, gave the three cheers with a will, and set to at their work heartily.

"And their work was cut out too. Hitherto all had gone smoothly enough, but, from the time we turned our head homewards, luck seemed to leave us. As old Ben had said, and as we of course knew must be the case, most of the gear was pretty nearly as rotten as it could hold together. The standing rigging was tolerably sound, though even that wanted a deal of setting up and looking after.

But as for the running gear, you couldn't sheet home a sail or brace up a yard, but sheet or brace would come home in your hands, and leave spars and canvas flying about anyhow.

"However, we worked like men to get things a bit shipshape, and, if the fine weather had only held on another week, should have been right enough. Harry, who, though full of dash and daring, was too good a sailor to run needless risks, would not venture with his ship in this half-crippled state to take her into anything like high latitudes, but went up to the northward of New Zealand, and kept, as it might be, along the edge of the south-east trade. It was a goodish bit longer track of course, but he reckoned on having lighter weather. And so indeed we had for a month and more, when, just as we were almost right, and he was thinking of hauling to the southward before the week was out, down comes a squall that takes all the topgallant-masts out of her, and springs the foretop-mast so badly, that there's nothing for it but to shift the spar altogether and send up a new one.

"We thought ourselves lucky in being within easy reach of the islands, and Harry determined on running her in to refit. I've often heard the parson say how little we could tell what was likely and what was not, and I never hear him say it but what I think of that time. I'd give the five best years' pay I ever earned, that those accursed islands had been a thousand miles dead to windward of us!

"Not but what we enjoyed ourselves well enough at the time. There isn't more beautiful scenery in any part of the world than you'll find in these Pacific Islands, nor a finer climate for those who are not afraid of a little heat. For the whole month and more we lay there we never saw a cloud, and most part of the day the pitch would be bubbling up out of the seams, and you'd have to keep the cover on the binnacle for fear the little dabs of sealing-wax stuck under the compass-card to balance it should melt, as I've seen them do myself, and the card turn right up on its side, like a dandy soldier's cap or a shark gorging a bit of pork. Yet all the time the air would be so fresh and pure that you hardly knew it was hot at all till you felt the skin peeling off your face, or pretty near blistered your fingers taking up a marlinespike that had been lying in the sun. I used to think nothing of walking

ten or a dozen miles up among the mountains, through the coffee and rice grounds, and among the great waving cocoanut-trees, till we'd come upon some mountain-pool with its deep, clear, dark green water, and the great broad-leaved ferns and plantains hanging over it, and perhaps half-a-dozen native girls laughing and diving and plunging in and out, and caring no more for us than if they'd really been made of bronze, as they looked to be, or had been just so many tame ducks in a farmyard pond.

"Then at night the canoes would be out two or three hundred strong, each with its huge flaring torch in its bows, at which the flashing flying-fish would leap like moths, till we could hardly haul them quickly enough out of the nets spread for them; and big, queer-shaped fishes would come looming up through the clear water with every scale on their backs shining like burnished silver with the phosphorescence, and spiteful-looking sharks would rise just under you, so close that you could drive a boathook right into their ugly jaws; and every now and then there would be a splash and a little fountain of diamonds thrown up, and a long streak of light shooting down to the bottom, fifty fathoms deep, as some native diver would go right in among them to bring us up a great pink or blue shell, or branch of coral, or huge oyster with, mayhap, a pearl or two in it.

"And there were other amusements, too, not quite so harmless; for drink is plentiful out there and morals easy, and I doubt if ever a ship's crew is much improved by being berthed for any time alongside a coral reef. Several of our smartest lads spent their liberty in a way they might have regretted all their lives. It mattered little enough for that, however, poor fellows, as things turned out; while, as for poor Harry Corbett, it was neither drink nor dissipation that ruined him—and he the noblest fellow and finest seaman that ever trod a plank!

"You'll laugh at me perhaps when I tell you that, boy as I was, I seemed to have a sort of presentiment of what was coming. But so it was. I've often heard say that dumb creatures have a sort of instinct in this way, and that a man or a woman that horses and dogs don't take to must have something wrong with them somewhere; and I've a notion myself that children are a little in the same way. It looks like it in this case, at all events.

"Of course when the Helen Macdonald came dragging into port in a breeze that hardly darkened the water, with all three topgallants struck and a reef in the foretop-sail, it was pretty clear to the people on shore what she had put in there for. The anchor was hardly down before a handsome whaleboat, rowed by four tattooed natives, was alongside, and the steersman—a tall, handsome fellow in Panama hat, spotless white shirt and trousers, canvas shoes, red silk sash, and no jacket, who had handled his heavy twenty-foot oar as lightly and easily as a Spanish girl flirts her fan—was down in the captain's cabin settling the terms on which the repairs were to be done over a glass of grog and a cheroot. Poor Harry took to the stranger at once. Before the day was out he was a favourite with everyone on board. With everyone on board, that is to say, except me. I took a dislike to him—a perfectly blind and unreasonable dislike, but none the less strong for that—from the first moment he set foot on our deck.

"That night we stayed on board, and the new comer—Pickering his name was—stayed with us, examining into all the details of the work that had to be done, taking measurements, and arranging everything with Harry and the mate. There was a spare topmast on the booms, of course, but it had never been a very well-seasoned spar, and after its three years' exposure was decided to be quite untrustworthy. So a new one had to be obtained, and the next day Harry went ashore with Mr. Pickering to choose it. He took me with him, and a very pleasant day we had; and that night we slept at Mr. Pickering's bungalow, about half a mile outside the little town.

"It was a simple place enough, built of wood, and only one storey high, of course. The high-pitched roof, thatched three feet thick with long reeds, projected six or seven feet all round, so as to make a wide verandah, the north and west sides of which were shut in, like the windows of the house itself, by thick grass mats, kept constantly closed and wet while the sun was on them, and clewed up at night to let in the breeze. There was not much furniture about—just two or three long grass hammocks in the verandah, a heavy table, and half-a-dozen cane chairs in the sitting-room, one swinging shelf with perhaps a dozen books on it, and in a corner of the room a little wheel just like that of yours. I wondered what it was for when I first

caught sight of it, which was not for some minutes—for on first coming in from the hot sunlight outside the room was as dark as pitch. I found out all about it afterwards, to my sorrow.

"It wasn't brought out that first night, however. There were still plenty of things to talk and settle about, and Harry had done a long day's work, and was tired and glad to turn in in one of the grass hammocks in the verandah, where Mr. Pickering and I occupied two others. Before many days were over, however, the work was all in train, and as the mate was a thoroughly trustworthy officer, Harry had comparatively little to do. Then one night as they sat in the verandah smoking their cheroots, and watching the fire-flies dancing in and out among the huge creepers that climbed all over it, Mr. Pickering called to his Chinese servant, and bade him bring out the wheel from the corner of the dining-room, and set it on the little round table between them.

"Ever try your hand at anything of this kind, Captain Corbett?" he asked.

"No. Harry hadn't even so much as heard of a roulette-wheel, and Mr. Pickering had to explain it all to him, while I sat and listened, and thought how simple it all sounded, and what an easy game it must be to win at. We used to play at commerce, I remembered, sometimes at home, before father died; but I had been quite a little chap then, and never thoroughly understood how the 'fishes' came and went, or why I used to get a penny a dozen for mine at the end. But this seemed all as natural as possible, and when by-and-by they began to play, and the little ball went running round and round, always, as it seemed to me, hopping at last into just the very hole that was wanted for Harry to win, I thought there never was such a game, and was quite vexed when Harry, who was a deal more careful of me than of himself, told me laughingly that gambling wasn't good for little boys, and wouldn't let me put my sixpence on the thirty-three, which had already turned up twice running, and which actually did come up again, so that I should have won seventeen shillings. As for Harry, he only played on the black and red, but before the evening was over, he had won nearly five pounds.

"What's the matter with you, you young monkey?" he asked, good-humouredly pulling my ear as I sat very silent, and I'm afraid a trifle sulky, in

the stern-sheets alongside him, as we pulled on board.

"I muttered something about my seventeen shillings, and about his wishing to keep all the luck to himself.

"No, Dick," he said, 'you're wrong there. I won't let you gamble, not even in a mild way like this, because I promised your mother I wouldn't. But half of all I make this voyage goes to give you a start in the world, whatever it is, and however it comes. So don't you be afraid of not having your share of the luck.'

"Ah, poor Harry! He little thought what luck it was that night's work was to bring him, or how many were to have a share in it."

HOW OLD WAS HAMLET?

THE Hamlet of the theatre may be of any age, varying, let us say, between seventeen and seventy; and usually, it must be said of him, that he appears to be somewhat stricken in years. Mr. F. A. Marshall, whose ingenious Study of Hamlet contains many valuable practical hints to the performer, recommends that the representative of Hamlet "should try and look as young as he can, without having recourse to much paint." But sometimes all the trying in the world will fail to bring about youthfulness of aspect. "We wish he would wear a wig," wrote a critic, in 1830, of Mr. Young, the tragedian, "for the paucity of his own hair makes him look extremely old." The best of wigs, however, whether of flowing flaxen, or of that revived Brutus pattern, which dates from the first French Revolution, will not always enable an old actor to appear like a young Hamlet. False hair will do something, and the art of "making up" generally may do much; but there are wrinkles which are like trenches that may not be carried by assault. Moreover, declining years are apt to be attended by an increase of corpulence, which is a formidable redoubt, very hard to sap or reduce in any way.

It is understood, however, that Hamlet, the Hamlet of the poet no less than the Hamlet of the playhouse, may fairly be credited with a certain amplitude of waist and general portliness. "Our son is fat and scant of breath," remarks Queen Gertrude. There are students whose confined and sedentary life makes them pale and wan; but Hamlet was perhaps constitutionally of plethoric habit. Stress may not be laid upon his reference to his "too

solid flesh," for he had here, perhaps, in view less his own form than a figure of speech; but it may be noted that he had, upon his own showing, "foregone all custom of exercises"—an abstinence which must have induced to corpulence—although this statement is hardly to be reconciled with his admission before his duel, that he has been "in continual practice" with the foils since Laertes had left Denmark for France. The fatness of Hamlet, however, has been frequently ascribed to the fact, that the leading actors of Shakespeare's time, for whom he contrived his plays, were rather obese gentlemen, whose physical condition had to be borne in mind by contemporary dramatists.

The tragedy of Hamlet, as Mr. Payne Collier conjectures, was first brought upon the stage in the winter of 1601, or the spring of 1602; for, under date the 26th July, 1602, appeared an entry of publication in the books of the Stationers' Company—"A Booke, The Revenge of Hamlett prince of Denmarke, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberleyn his servants." The players of Shakespeare's time, whom rumour or tradition has credited with the impersonation of Hamlet, are three in number—Joseph Taylor, John Lowin, and Richard Burbadge. In 1602 Burbadge was, perhaps, about thirty-five years of age; Lowin, about twenty-six; Taylor could scarcely have been more than seventeen. Were they all fat? "Taylor," writes Davies, in his *Dramatic Miscellanies*, "is generally allowed to be the original Hamlet, and at the time the words of 'fat and scant of breath' were put into the queen's mouth, he might have been plumper of person than the author wished he should be for the actor of young Hamlet." Striplings of seventeen are rarely fat, however. And the evidence that Taylor was the first Hamlet is by no means conclusive. Wright, in his *Historia Histrionica*, 1699, says simply that "Taylor acted Hamlet incomparably well." Downes, in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, 1708, records "of the performance of Hamlet in 1662, that 'Sir William Davenant, having seen Mr. Taylor of the Blackfriars' Company act it, who had been instructed by the author, Mr. Shakespeare, taught Mr. Betterton in every particle of it, gained him esteem and reputation superlative to all other plays.' Neither Wright nor Downes in his own person could have known anything of the original performance of Hamlet. Taylor, as Mr. Collier suggests,

may have taken the part as the "double" of Burbadge, when he was unable to appear; for Burbadge Mr. Collier holds to have been without question the first Hamlet. "And we may be sure," he adds, "that Burbadge did not relinquish so prominent and applauded a character until his death"—which happened in 1619, three years after the death of Shakespeare. It will be seen that Davies's supposition that Taylor was plump of person rests altogether upon the doubtful assumption that he was the first Hamlet. In truth, we are without information on the subject of Taylor's figure, and there is no saying for certain whether he was or not fat or lean. In 1602 Taylor was, perhaps, more likely to be playing Ophelia than Hamlet.

The claim of Lowin to be the first Hamlet rests merely upon the statement of one John Roberts, who, describing himself as "a strolling player," published in 1729 "an Answer to Mr. Pope's Preface to Shakespeare, being a Vindication of the old actors who were the publishers and performers of that author's plays." Lowin, however, did not join the association of King James's players, of which Shakespeare was a member, till 1603—a year after the date assigned to the production of Hamlet. Trueman, the old cavalier who takes part in the dialogue contained in Wright's *Historia Histrionica*, after stating that Shakespeare—who, as he had heard, "was a much better poet than player"—Burbadge, Flemmings, and others "of the older sort," were dead before he knew the town, proceeds to record that in his time "before the wars Lowin used to act with mighty applause Falstaff, Morose, Volpone, Mammon in *The Alchemist*, and Melantius in *The Maid's Tragedy*." To this list Roberts, the strolling player, adds the characters of Hamlet and Henry the Eighth. That Lowin played Henry the Eighth seems probable. Downes, in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, in allusion to the production of the play of King Henry the Eighth at the theatre in Lincoln's-inn-fields, in 1664, writes: "The part of the king was so right and justly done by Mr. Betterton, he being instructed in it by Sir William Davenant, who had it from old Mr. Lowin, that had his instructions from Mr. Shakespeare, that I dare and will aver none can or ever will come near him in this age in the performance of that part." But there is want of support for Roberts's statement that Lowin played Hamlet, assuming Roberts to mean that

Lowin was the original Hamlet. He might have played the part after Burbadge, or even after Taylor. From the fact that Lowin appeared as Falstaff and Henry the Eighth, it may be assumed that he was a gentleman of portly presence. Betterton, who sustained all three characters, Hamlet, Henry the Eighth, and Falstaff, was, we know on the authority of Cibber and Anthony Aston, of middle height, inclining to corpulence, his face scarred by the small-pox, his head large, his shoulders round, his figure ill-made, his limbs thick and clumsy. He could scarcely have looked the character of young Hamlet, however possessed of the qualifications of being "fat and scant of breath." Nevertheless, Steele, in *The Tatler*, says of him that, "though about seventy, he acted youth, and by the prevalent power of proper manner, gesture, and voice, appeared through the whole drama a young man of great expectation, vivacity, and enterprise."

Mr. Payne Collier maintains that Shakespeare, in his description of his hero, was expressly considering the physical peculiarities of Richard Burbadge, and in such wise suiting the part to the player. Our information touching the personal appearance of Burbadge is derived from a *Funeral Elegy* on the death of the famous actor, discovered in manuscript in Mr. Heber's collection, and first printed by the Shakespeare Society in 1846. There seems no reason to question the authenticity of this production, albeit a suspicion of fraud hangs like a cloud over certain of the society's publications. The elegy makes mention of many of the parts played by the actor, and refers to his lowness of stature:

What a wide world was in that little space,
Thyself a world—the Globe, thy fittest place!
Thy stature small, but every thought and mood
Might thoroughly from thy face be understood;
And his whole action he could change with ease,
From ancient Lear to youthful Pericles.

His gifts as an actor are then observed upon; and he is addressed as Roscius, a title bestowed in a later age upon both Betterton and David Garrick:

England's great Roscius! For what Roscius
Was unto Rome, that Burbadge was to us!
How did his speech become him, and his pace
Suit with his speech, and every action grace
Them both alike, whilst not a word did fall
Without just weight to ballast it withal.
Hast thou but spoke to Death, and used the power
Of thy enchanting tongue, at that first hour
Of his assault he had let fall his dart,
And quite been charmed with thy all-charming art;
This Death well knew, and to prevent this wrong,
He first made seizure on thy wondrous tongue;
Then on the rest; 'twas easy; by degrees
The slender ivy twines the hugest trees.

It has been inferred from this allusion to the manner of his death, that Burbadge was mortally stricken with paralysis, which in the first instance affected his speech. The verses possess little poetic merit; but they are interesting, because of the information they supply. Burbadge's appearance in Hamlet is thus recorded:

No more young Hamlet, though but scant of breath,
Shall cry "Revenge" for his dear father's death.

A quotation may be merely intended, but it seems likely that the writer had in mind the circumstance of Burbadge being himself fat and scant of breath—

Poor Romeo never more shall tears beget
For Juliet's love, and cruel Capulet:
Harry shall not be seen as king or prince,
They died with thee, dear Dick,
Not to revive again.
And Crookback, as befits, shall cease to live.
Tyrant Macbeth, with unwashed, bloody hand,
We vainly now may hope to understand.

There is also mention of

The red-haired Jew
Who sought the bankrupt merchant's pound of flesh.

The Elizabethan method of "making up" for the part of Shylock is thus revealed. Othello is referred to as the actor's "chiefest part;" and other characters in plays by the contemporaries of Shakespeare are enumerated—Edward the Second in Marlowe's tragedy of that name; Antonio in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*; Vendice in Cyril Tourneur, *Revenger's Tragedy*; Brachiano in Webster's *White Devil*; Frankford in Heywood's *Woman Killed with Kindness*; Philaster in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy; Jeronimo in Kyd's tragedy of that name, and Malevole in Marston's *Malcontent*. Jeronimo is generally considered to be the first part of Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and is described by Mr. Collier as "the first play upon record that bears evidence of having been written for a particular performer, a man of unusually small stature, and in many places this circumstance is brought forward." In one scene Jeronimo exclaims:

I'll not be long away;
As short my body, long shall be my stay.

and afterwards—

My mind's a giant, though my bulk be small.

The first representation of Jeronimo is supposed to have occurred about 1587, when Burbadge could have been no more than twenty. Perhaps he was then a short, young man. At thirty-five, he may have been short, and stout, too.

It may be noted, that the line "He's fat and scant of breath," does not occur in the

early and imperfect edition of Hamlet of 1603. Was it added to suit Burbadge? And was there a further change made also to suit Mr. Burbadge, the leading tragedian of the time? In the edition of 1603, the gravedigger says of Yorick's skull :

Looke you, here's a skull hath bin here this dozen year,

Let me see, ever since our last King Hamlet
Slew Fortenbrasse in combat, young Hamlet's father,
He that's mad.

But in all subsequent editions, the gravedigger says : "Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three-and-twenty years." The effect of this alteration is to add considerably to Hamlet's age. "Alas, poor Yorick!" he says, "I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination it is, my gorge rises at it! Here hang those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft," &c. &c. How old then was Hamlet, when Yorick died? But Hamlet's age is even more distinctly fixed by other lines which do not occur in the early edition of 1603 :

HAMLET. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

FIRST CLOWN. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

HAMLET. How long is that since?

FIRST CLOWN. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that; it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent to England.

And presently, he adds :

I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Mr. Marshall writes : "It would appear that Shakespeare added these details, which tend to prove Hamlet to have been thirty years old, for much the same reason as he inserted the line, 'He's fat, and scant of breath,' namely, in order to render Hamlet's age and personal appearance more in accordance with those of the great actor, Burbadge, who personated him." The edition of 1603 is generally accounted a piratical copy of the first sketch of the play. It contains many errors, but it may fairly be accepted as the original text of the Hamlet of Shakespeare. The editors of the Cambridge Shakespeare write : "The edition of 1603 is obviously a very imperfect reproduction of the play, and there is every reason to believe that it was printed from a manuscript surreptitiously obtained. The manuscript may have been compiled in the first instance from shorthand notes taken during the representation, but there are many errors in the printed text, which seem like errors of a

copyist, rather than of a hearer. . . .

We believe that the defects of the manuscript from which the quarto of 1603 was printed, had been in part, at least, supplemented by a reference to the authentic copy in the library of the theatre. Very probably, the man employed for this purpose was some inferior actor, or servant, who would necessarily work in haste, and by stealth, and, in any case, would not be likely to work very conscientiously for the printer or bookseller who was paying him to deceive his masters."

The introduction in later editions of passages which practically increase the age of Hamlet, may be viewed as favourable to the theory that the character might have been sustained in the first instance by a youthful player, such as Taylor was in 1602, and afterwards allotted to the more mature Burbadge. It is to be noted, however, that there is only a year's interval between the issue of the original or imperfect text, and the publication of complete editions of the play. The Hamlet of twenty, let us say, was soon supplanted by the Hamlet of thirty. Moreover, Burbadge, his thirty-five years notwithstanding, was not thought to be too old to represent such youthful characters as Romeo, Henry the Fifth, "both king and prince," Pericles, &c. Why should he be thought too old to represent the Hamlet even of 1603? At the same time the changes made in the text in this respect are hardly to be attributed to the chance error of a copyist, working however hastily and stealthily. Even if we concede that the line, "He's fat and scant of breath," was accidentally omitted from the edition of 1603, can we also admit that the mention of the date which makes Hamlet younger by some ten years was also matter of inadvertence? The "twelve years" of 1603 must have been deliberately altered to the "three-and-twenty years" of 1604. This change can hardly have been due to the error of a copyist, or of a hearer. It is rather to be believed that the author for some reason revised and amended his first statement. And clearly we are to accept implicitly the information furnished by the gravedigger; he is dealing strictly with matter of fact. Otherwise we might be tempted to think that the absolute knave, insisting upon preciseness of speech on the part of those who addressed him, was yet himself humorously inaccurate of statement, and, even in Hamlet's own presence, blundered curiously about his age.

The alteration of Hamlet's age has certainly an injurious effect upon the significance of the tragedy. If Hamlet is to be considered as of the age of thirty in the churchyard scene, why should the fact of his youth be so much insisted upon in all the other scenes? This is not the case of a drama in which long years are supposed to elapse between the acts; the action of Hamlet can hardly be supposed to occupy more than some five or six months. In the very first scene Horatio speaks of him as "young Hamlet." The ghost calls him, "Thou noble youth." His youth is also certainly implied in the fact that his mother, Gertrude, is by no means of advanced age, but still possesses charms that have tempted Claudius to commit crimes for the sake of winning her. And there is further argument for his youth in the general acceptance of Claudius as king. All the dramatis personæ seem to have agreed that Hamlet, although his father's lawful heir, was too young to mount the throne. Even the ghost of the late king, while unsparingly accusing Claudius, does not reproach him for his usurpation; nor does the ghost seek to spur the dull revenge of young Hamlet by reminding him that he has been deprived of his crown by his uncle. Claudius is remorseful because of the murder he has committed, not because of any wrong done to young Hamlet relative to his title to the throne. Upon one occasion only, when he says, "I lack advancement," does Hamlet seem to express a desire for sovereignty. Rosencrantz reminds him that he has the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark. Hamlet replies: "Ah, sir, but While the grass grows—the proverb is something musty." A certain impatience for the throne is signified by the musty proverb, "While the grass grows the steed starves." When Hamlet charges Claudius with being "a cutpurse of the empire and the rule, that from a shelf the precious diadem stole and put it in his pocket," the meaning clearly is that the late king has been robbed, not his son.

Many of the dramatis personæ are the youthful contemporaries of Hamlet. Laertes is called "young Laertes;" Fortinbras is called "young Fortinbras." Horatio, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern are Hamlet's fellow-students. Hamlet meditates returning to Wittenberg as though to complete his education; upon the sudden death of his father he had been hastily summoned from his studies at the uni-

versity. Horatio speaks of himself as a truant; Hamlet tells him that he will be taught to drink at Elsinore: Horatio is still in a state of pupilage. Hamlet reminds Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of "the consonance of our youth," and addresses them as "good lads." Laertes cautions Ophelia against the trifling of Hamlet's favour, as "a fashion and a toy in blood, a violet in the youth of primy nature." Both Claudius and the queen have a certain lecturing air when they address Hamlet on his waywardness. Gertrude prepares to give him a maternal scolding, to "tax him home" in her closet. She tells him that he has his father much offended, and that he answers with an idle tongue. She would not so have spoken to a man of thirty. Claudius's speech upon Hamlet's "obstinate condolement" is a sort of moral essay suited to very youthful capacity. Skill in fence is spoken of as "a very riband in the cap of youth."

Moreover, there is a sort of boyishness about Hamlet evidenced by the quips and cranks he permits himself; by his pranks at the expense of Polonius; by his method of receiving Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; by his envy of Laertes's fame as a fencer; and even by his hysterical jocoseness after the departure of the ghost in the first act. Mr. Marshall, setting on one side the statements of the gravedigger, thinks that Shakespeare intended Hamlet to be nearer twenty than thirty, or perhaps about twenty-five years old; certainly not older. Mr. Minto, who has written ingeniously upon the subject, conceives that Hamlet "is intended to be thought of" as a youth of seventeen, adding: "I am not so absolute as the gravedigger. I am prepared to admit eighteen; I might even, though with reluctance, give in to nineteen; but there I draw the line—and I am quite willing to maintain my original position of seventeen." Other critics and students prefer to pin their faith to the gravedigger's testimony, and maintain, in spite of every objection, that Hamlet was assuredly a man of thirty. Professor Dowden, for instance, holds it to be incredible that Shakespeare could have put his "saddest and most thoughtful soliloquies" into the mouth of a boy of seventeen. Mr. Minto replies that we are apt to underrate very considerably the precocity of boys of seventeen, and that questions concerning the mysteries of life are more common among boys under twenty than among men of thirty. It must be remembered, moreover, that young Hamlet, like the Edwin of Beattie's

Minstrel, was "no vulgar boy." He was a prince of refined and cultivated intelligence. He is exhibited under very exceptional conditions. And there is proof of his youth not only in his unrestrained sorrow for his dead father; in his passion of shame at his mother's second marriage; in his excitability, irresolution, and capriciousness; but in the fact that he breaks down under the weight of the vengeance he is charged to execute. It is too much for his strength, it is beyond his years. Indeed, he is of so weak and immature a nature that he has contemplated self-slaughter even before the dreadful circumstances attendant upon his father's death have been made known to him, and while he is unaware that in addition to mourning his lost parent he has to revenge his foul and unnatural murder. His philosophical musings may be worthy of a man, but there is nothing philosophical about his conduct. His subtle plans crumble to pieces. He obtains his vengeance at last almost accidentally—Claudius is killed in a sort of chance medley. As Mr. Minto concludes: "Whatever may be our exception to Hamlet's character, to my mind the significance of the tragedy is greatly deepened by what seems to me to have been in the dramatist's original design—the thought of bright youth, with fresh, untainted faculties, suddenly plunged in a bewildering sea of crime and intrigue, and perishing there tragically after an heroic struggle."

After all has been said, Hamlet's age must remain, as the poet has left it, an inconsistency. Students and commentators can hardly adjust what the author, whether by design or accident, has left unsettled.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCHILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IV. NO.

"You are very solemn. Do you find me very difficult to-day?"

"About as usual. This is only the tenth time I have tried to begin—that is to say, only my tenth failure. I tell you what, Mademoiselle Clari," said Walter Gordon, throwing down his brush in a temper, half genuine, half affected, "there is only one way to paint you. In the first place, there must be a great painter."

Mademoiselle Clari smiled lazily—a new

expression of a new mood. "He is great enough to content me."

"Ah, but that isn't enough; though he were Titian and Raphael rolled into one. He must fall in love with you—desperately, passionately, over head and ears."

The prima donna smiled again; but not lazily. The light, as it were, mounted up from her lips to her eyes, and then travelled from her eyes to her lips again. It was not a blush—the colour that came was not of warmth, but of light only.

"That would be good. I think I would like to be loved desperately, passionately, over the head and all over the ears."

"And then," said Walter, with enthusiasm, "this great painter, this gigantic lover, must watch you for years and years, till he had caught you in the right mood with just the right look in you—and then——"

"Paint me?"

"No—kill you."

"Kill me?"

"Yes—stab you to the heart with one blow, so quickly that you would not feel, and your face would have no time to change. Then——"

"Then?"

"He would be able to study you at his leisure, you see," said Walter, thrusting his hands deep into his trousers pockets, and looking at her as if he had said the most matter-of-course thing in the world.

Mademoiselle Clari, always slow to take in a new idea, considered gravely. Then, at last, she smiled approval.

"I would love that," she said, slowly and deliberately, as if she were dwelling lingeringly upon a pleasant flavour. "That would be a good way of loving—to be loved so that a man would kill me to keep me."

"For art's sake, of course, mademoiselle."

"No—for mine." A passing frown. "I have nothing to do with art. I—I hate the name. It is ciarlatanismo—porcheria—humbug, what you say. I would not for art have one cut my finger. But—do you know, I think you know me a little?"

"I've tried to, anyway. Ten times."

"No. Not that way. And not very much; but a little—yes," she added, reflectively. It was plainly not one of her intense days, but she was inclined for variety of mood. Perhaps she felt herself challenged to crowd as many expressions as possible into the smallest fragment of time.

"Perhaps I know you better than you think," said Walter, betaking himself to his fallen brush again, though he had to do for himself what an emperor did for Titian.

"I think you have a great deal of passion in you; so much that it makes you seem cold."
 "You think so?" She looked interested. Self was never an uninteresting topic to Mademoiselle Clari.

"I'm sure of it. And then—then you have a temper. People generally have a temper who have very sweet voices and very sweet smiles."

"Yes, I have a temper," she said, very sweetly indeed; in a very sweet voice and with a very sweet smile.

"But you have what goes with a warm temper."

"Yes? What is that? Hating?"

"No; a warm and kind heart—that is what I mean."

"I said you only knew me a little. But you do look solemn! What are your thinks now?"

"Coffee and strawberries, mademoiselle."

"Coffee and strawberries?"

"Surely. I am thinking of a lady I once knew who was angry, very angry, about a cup of coffee, and then——"

"I was angry about the coffee because it was poison——"

"But the strawberries, mademoiselle. It is on account of the strawberries that I want you to do a real kindness——"

"To you?"

"No. You are kind enough to me when you sit there in the sunshine. It is to a friend of mine."

"Certainly, to a friend of yours," said Clari, indifferently. "Who is he?"

"It is a girl," said Walter. "You can help her—and only you can. I'll tell you all about her, and—well, it is a sad story."

"That is nothing so strange," said Clari, with a sudden stiff coldness in her voice—almost of contempt; another new note, which almost startled Walter by its abruptness. "Well?"

"She is the daughter of the organist of Deepweald. She was a fellow-student of mine at Lindenheim. She had a lovely voice, and promised great things."

"A very lovely voice?" asked Clari, languidly.

"Very," said Walter, emphatically. "One of the most beautiful I ever heard."

"Was she a great friend of yours?"

"We were very great friends; but I have lost sight of her for some years—I met her again at Deepweald."

"Since you have been painting me?"

"Since I have been here. And she——"

"I know. She has the very loveliest voice, she is beautiful, she is charming, she is divine. I know—I know."

Walter had been painting, inattentively, while he was speaking. He stopped short, however, and looked at Clari. What in the world had he said to offend the prima donna? Offended she was, that was certain. She was not frowning, as was usual with her when out of temper; but there was a kind of cloud over her face. Surely she was too indisputably great in her calling, to be jealous because she heard a voice praised that was not her own? And yet the tone of her words certainly suggested jealousy.

"I never said so, mademoiselle."

"If she is so divine," said Clari, "she will help herself, monsieur. What should I do? I have enough to care for myself, *I, per Bacco!* This is the world, monsieur. If she was only like me, she would want help, but divine creatures do not want for help while there are men."

"Mademoiselle! She is no more to be compared to you than a bud to a blossom——"

"It is the blossoms that fade, monsieur."

"I was saying," said Walter, "that she is the daughter of the organist at Deepweald. And he is grown so deaf that he cannot follow his profession, he will have to lose his place, and that means ruin. They have no means of living."

"You have learned a great deal in Deepweald."

"The girl ought to make a name—not like yours, of course, but enough to live by."

"Let her sing, then."

"Her father is an eccentric man—half mad, I should say. He refuses her every chance—he will let her do nothing. There is nobody to help her—literally, nobody. With a fortune in her voice she is like to starve."

"They say in my country, Heaven helps those who help themselves. One need not have the voice if one has the face, monsieur."

"But Heaven needs agents, mademoiselle. I thought perhaps when you heard the story you might do something. You might hear her—and a word from you——"

"What could I do? You can do more than I—if you have such interest in this girl. She is nothing to me. And if she were——"

Clari was indeed more than displeased. It was almost as if the whole sweetness had gone out of her when the talk of the young man, hitherto devoted to her own glory, even to the point of declaring Love to be the only painter fit to hold a brush

in her honour, had barrenly turned off into the likeness of a trap to catch her sympathy for a—friend. Had he not been so full of his duty to Celia, and of his eagerness to invest the influence of a woman like Clari in her behalf, he might have remembered that his intercourse with the prima donna had been sliding, all these weeks past, with sure slowness, from comradeship to intimacy, from intimacy to confidence, till sentiment² had grown warm and promised to grow warmer. And in such cases—he might surely have known—that a woman like Clari, whose summer already has lost its June, is not willing to be asked for sympathy with May.

"And if she were," she went on, after a pause, with a touch of bitter sharpness added to the coldness of her tone, "I would not help her. I would not help any girl I cared for to be like me. Can she sew?"

"She could never be like you."

"No—per Bacco! That is not likely. I am Clari."

Surely such jealousy was something abnormal. And yet what else could her feeling be? Walter felt himself ready to renounce his belief in his comprehension of womankind, once for all.

"I shall send her some pounds, and welcome; they shall buy her a sewing-machine. But I will not hear her—no. I have heard voices enough: I want no more. Tell her to sew; tell her from me, Clari, when you see her to-morrow. Is she so difficult to paint as I? Must you kill her to know her, like me? Very well. You shall kill her: it will be better for her. I will make no artists—no: per Bacco!"

"How have I made you angry?"

"I am not angry. I enrage," said Clari, as if leaping at an excuse for relieving herself by speaking hotly. "It is this art that enrages me."

"I wish I knew——"

"Oh, you shall know. I have been a girl too—and I know. There was one came to me and talked of art—like you to her. I was not happy—and you talk of being poor! I was poor—poor as she does not know. Art! Ah, that was a divine dream—all things: and love besides. I sold myself for it all—I have told you before. He was a demon. He made me sing, and sing, and sing; have I not told you all? I remember it—like yesterday! It was the Carnival. You have been in Rome—you have seen it all. I was a child; I knew nothing. I had lived in a prison; such a prison! And then, all at once, all in one moment, I found myself

alive. The moccili went out; it seemed as if I died again. Then he came, and told me I should live for ever if I followed him; that he would give me all I had seen, and make me a queen. He bound me to him, that I might not escape from him. He kept me his slave; I must serve, he said, that I might rule. I made myself a slave, for I knew I was to be a queen, and live, and have all the world. At last, he said, I have made you; you can sing. Ah, I knew that, as well as he! And then—then I learned what I had been bought for—art, gran Dio! Art—to wait till I could give him glory; to serve him like a slave till my youth was gone, and my voice was worn; to see other women becoming queens, and living my life—mine! That was not what I followed him for, gran Dio! Yes, I loved him. He made me. But he did not keep his bargain; he cheated me, with lies. What would you have done?"

It would be idle to say that Walter Gordon fairly comprehended one word of this outburst, which seemed to assume itself to be an intelligible story, though every detail was omitted, and though she leaped from point to point without a pause for questioning. Only one thing was clear to him thus far—the great prima donna had been gloriously trained, and was splendidly ungrateful. Though for what reason he could not conceive; unless it was that her first music-master and impresario had tried to cheat her—not so extraordinary an experience as to call forth such life-long indignation.

"I should have done like you," he said; "done myself and my master justice."

"Ecco!" she said triumphantly. "That I have done! I told him to his face—you have made me, and I am made. I would not wait—I had not changed the Ghetto for art—I sang. Ah, I loved to sing—then. He could not hinder me. We were in Florence then. I sang the first time there. Gran cielo, the furor that first time! The people went mad, monsieur! It was Lucia, it was triumph for me. Ah, he had taught me well—and I was to waste all that, all my soul and my glory for art—bah! It is a thing—I know not; I knew what I knew."

"You have not told me who he was—but surely he must have been proud of you."

"He was a demon. What he wanted—how could I tell? I left the theatre; I went home. When I went to the theatre, he had not said one word. He knew I was going to sing; he only said, 'Go, then.' Ah, do you know what a devil can do, when he is a man!"

Walter felt himself on the very brink of some strange discovery, though even then he was unable to comprehend the preface. Still, the fierce volubility of the prima donna, once set fully free, carried him away; her incoherent story infected him with something of its passion. He waited silently, that he might not by a gesture even divert its flow. He at least knew her well enough to know that the merest straw might turn the current in mid-course.

"He can rob a mother of her life—her child. That is what he can do. That is his revenge. That is art. And I hate art—that is why. Sing for art—gran Dio—I! I sing for revenge. I sing for glory. I sing for diamonds and flowers. That is my revenge—if he is anywhere in the world. Ah, art will have not much chance while I am alive. I sing because I hate art, and because I hate him. Paint me now—quick! Have you your dagger? Now, while the hate is out on me. You know me now—*eccomi quà!*"

Incoherent, incomprehensible, her passion was real. There was no doubt but that there stood before him the true Clari, beautiful, natural, and fascinating for—men who can love tiger-women. Walter Gordon would have given a year of his life to be able to paint her just as she was then. Any shadow of anything beyond sentiment for her that had been growing up in him died away into pure artistic admiration, intensified by the effect of her dramatic power. For even in the very truth of her passion was the tragic force of the born actress, which not even an outburst of nature could distort or lessen. It was art and nature in one. But she had not told her story. Was it literal truth, or only a bold metaphor made at random that some real man, in revenge for her having escaped from his managerial tyranny, had robbed her of a real child? That would indeed be satanic, because inhumanly incomprehensible.

And, whatever it all means, what could have produced this sudden outburst of confidence? Surely not his mere proposal that she should try the voice of a poor girl, with a view to putting her in the way of picking up a few professional windfalls. Could it really be that she, the great artist, really hated the very name of her art so intensely as to look with horror on

the idea of a fellow-woman's treading the same road? And then he thought of The Five Adzes, and could not convince himself that Clari's devotion to her calling was the result of such unadulterated hatred as she professed it to be. Her love of admiration was at least as genuine as the passion that had just been displayed before him. He could only wonder and reflect, as many a better and wiser man has done before him, what riddles some women are. Even Celia was beyond him, with the devotion to her capricious tyrant which seemed more outrageously complete than Clari's rebellion had been. If he could only persuade Celia to follow that far in the footsteps of the prima donna!

"Let us go," said Clari, "and look at the cucumbers."

That was the first thing she had said to-day that did not surprise him. He was prepared now for any variation of mood; had she really presented to him a dagger and her heart he would not have been surprised. But he noticed that she spoke sadly.

"And when," she asked, as they entered the garden, "are you going to Deepweald?" This more gently.

"I don't know. It all depends. Do you mean you are thinking of—"

"Hearing that girl? No. I've said so. But you can give her a note for me. That may help her—and her deaf father. Is she very beautiful?"

Walter was growing a little wiser, if only for friendship's sake; or, at least, a little more prudent. "She is pretty enough," he said, thinking of the gentle dark eyes, aus Lindenheim, that had never looked but kindly and sweetly, for all that they were so like Clari's—sometimes.

They had not quite reached the cucumber-frames, when Walter was aware of a tall clerical figure approaching them from the direction of the park. It raised its hat as it approached, and,

"May I speak to you for five minutes?" said the Reverend Reginald Gaveston to Mademoiselle Clari, before he nodded to Walter Gordon. "I was told I should most likely find you here."

Walter Gordon wondered, as well he might, what business the curate of St. Anselm's could possibly have with Mademoiselle Clari—of all men and of all women in the world.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER VI. BAD TIDINGS.

ABOUT the middle of October, there came a letter from the Marquis of Brotherton to his brother, which startled them all at Manor Cross very much indeed. In answering Lord George's communication as to the marriage, the marquis had been mysterious and disagreeable; but then he was always disagreeable, and would on occasions take the trouble to be mysterious also. He had warned his brother that he might himself want the house at Manor Cross; but he had said the same thing frequently during his residence in Italy, being always careful to make his mother and sisters understand that they might have to take themselves away any day at a very short warning. But now the short warning had absolutely come, and had come in such a shape as to upset everything at Manor Cross, and to upset everything at the Brotherton deanery. The letter was as follows:

"MY DEAR GEORGE,—I am to be married to the Marchesa Luigi. Her name is Catarina Luigi, and she is a widow. As to her age, you can ask her yourself when you see her, if you dare. I haven't dared. I suppose her to be ten years younger than myself. I did not expect that it would be so, but she says now that she would like to live in England. Of course I've always meant to go back myself some day. I don't suppose we shall be there before May, but we must have the house got ready. My mother and the girls had better look out for a place as soon as they

can. Tell my mother of course I will allow her the rent of Cross Hall, to which indeed she is entitled. I don't think she would care to live there, and neither she nor the girls would get on with my wife.—Yours,
B.

"I am waiting to know about getting the house painted and furnished."

When Lord George received this letter, he showed it first in privacy to his sister Sarah. As the reader will have understood, there had never been any close family affection between the present marquis and his brother and sisters; nor had he been a loving son to his mother. But the family at Manor Cross had always endeavoured to maintain a show of regard for the head of the family, and the old marchioness would no doubt have been delighted, had her eldest son come home and married an English wife. Lady Sarah, in performing what she had considered to be a family duty, had written regular despatches to her elder brother, telling him everything that happened about the place—despatches which he probably never read. Now there had come a blow indeed. Lady Sarah read the letter, and then looked into her brother's face.

"Have you told Mary?" she asked.

"I have told no one."

"It concerns her as much as any of us. Of course, if he has married, it is right that he should have his house. We ought to wish that he should live here."

"If he were different from what he is," said Lord George.

"If she is good it may be that he will become different. It is not the thing, but the manner in which he tells it to us. Did you ever hear her name before?"

"Never."

"What a way he has of mentioning her—about her age," said Lady Sarah, infinitely shocked. "Well, mamma must be told, of course. Why shouldn't we live at Cross Hall? I don't understand what he means about that. Cross Hall belongs to mamma for her life, as much as Manor Cross does to him for his."

Just outside the park gate, at the side of the park farthest away from Brotherton, and therefore placed very much out of the world, there stood a plain substantial house, built in the days of Queen Anne, which had now for some generations been the habitation of the dowager of the Brotherton family. When the late marquis died, this had become for her life the property of the marchioness; but had been ceded by her to her son, in return for the loan of the big house. The absentee marquis had made with his mother the best bargain in his power, and had let the dower-house, known as Cross Hall, to a sporting farmer. He now kindly offered to allow his mother to have the rent of her own house, signifying at the same time his wish that all his family should remove themselves out of his way.

"He wishes that we should take ourselves off," said Lord George, hoarsely.

"But I do not see why we are to give way to his wishes, George. Where are we to go? Of what use can we be in a strange country? Wherever we are we shall be very poor, but our money will go further here than elsewhere. How are we to get up new interests in life? The land is his, but the poor people belong to us as much as to him. It is unreasonable."

"It is frightfully selfish."

"I for one am not prepared to obey him in this," said Lady Sarah. "Of course mamma will do as she pleases, but I do not see why we should go. He will never live here all the year through."

"He will be sick of it after a month. Will you read the letter to my mother?"

"I will tell her, George. She had better not see the letter, unless she makes a point of it. I will read it again, and then do you keep it. You should tell Mary at once. It is natural that she should have built hopes on the improbability of Brotherton's marriage."

Before noon on that day the news had been disseminated through the house. The old marchioness, when she first heard of the Italian wife, went into hysterics, and then was partly comforted by remind-

ing herself that all Italians were not necessarily bad. She asked after the letter repeatedly; and at last, when it was found to be impossible to explain to her otherwise what her eldest son meant about the houses, it was shown to her. Then she began to weep afresh.

"Why mayn't we live at Cross Hall, Sarah?" she said.

"Cross Hall belongs to you, mamma, and nothing can hinder you from living there."

"But Augustus says that we are to go away."

The marchioness was the only one of the family who ever called the marquis by his Christian name, and she did so only when she was much disturbed.

"No doubt he expresses a wish that we should do so?"

"Where are we to go to, and I at my age?"

"I think you should live at Cross Hall."

"But he says that we mayn't. We could never go on there if he wants us to go away."

"Why not, mamma? It is your house as much as this is his. If you will let him understand that when you leave this you mean to go there, he will probably say nothing more about it."

"Mr. Price is living there. I can't make Mr. Price go away directly the painter people come in here. They'll come to-morrow, perhaps, and what am I to do then?"

The matter was discussed throughout the whole day between Lady Sarah and her mother, the former bearing the old woman's plaintive weakness with the utmost patience, and almost succeeding, before the evening came, in inducing her mother to agree to rebel against the tyranny of her son. There were peculiar difficulties and peculiar hardships in the case. The marquis could turn out all the women of his family at a day's notice. He had only to say to them "Go!" and they must be gone. And he could be rid of them without even saying or writing another word. A host of tradesmen would come, and then of course they must go. But Mr. Price at Cross Hall must have a regular year's notice, and that notice could not now be given till Lady Day next.

"If the worst comes to the worst, mamma, we will go and live in Brotherton for the time. Mr. Holdenough or the dean would find some place for us." Then the old lady began to ask how Mary had

borne the news; but as yet Lady Sarah had not been able to interest herself personally about Mary.

Lord George was surprised to find how little his wife was affected by the terrible thunderbolt which had fallen among them. On him the blow had been almost as terrible as on his mother. He had taken a house in town, at the instance of the dean, and in consequence of a promise made before his marriage, which was sacred to him, but which he regretted. He would have preferred, himself, to live the whole year through at Manor Cross. Though he had not very much to do there, the place was never dull to him. He liked the association of the big house. He liked the sombre grandeur of the park. He liked the magistrate's bench, though he rarely spoke a word when he was there. And he liked the thorough economy of the life. But as to that house in town, though his wife's fortune would enable him to live there four or five months, he knew that he could not stretch the income so as to bear the expense of the entire year. And yet, what must he do now? If he could abandon the house in town, then he could join his mother as to some new country house. But he did not dare to suggest that the house in town should be abandoned. He was afraid of the dean, and afraid, so to say, of his own promise. The thing had been stipulated, and he did not know how to go back from the stipulation.

"Going to leave Manor Cross," said Mary, when she was told. "Dear me! how odd. Where will they go to?"

It was evident to her husband from the tone of voice that she regarded her own house in Munster Court—for it was her own—as her future residence, as hers and his. In asking where "they" would live, she spoke of the other ladies of the family. He had expected that she would have shown some disappointment at the danger to her future position which this new marriage would produce. But in regard to that she was, he thought, either perfectly indifferent, or else a very good actor. In truth, she was almost indifferent. The idea that she might some day be Lady Brotherton had been something to her, but not much. Her happiness was not nearly as much disturbed by this marriage as it had been by the allusion made to her dress. She herself could hardly understand the terrible gloom which seemed during that evening

and the whole of the next day to have fallen on the entire family.

"George, does it make you very unhappy?" she said, whispering to him on the morning of the second day.

"Not that my brother should marry," he said. "God forbid that I, as a younger brother, should wish to debar him from any tittle of what belongs to him. If he would marry well it ought to be a joy to us all."

"Is not this marrying well?"

"What, with a foreigner? with an Italian widow? And then there will, I fear, be great trouble in finding a comfortable home for my mother."

"Amelia says she can go to Cross Hall."

"Amelia does not know what she is talking of. It would be very long before they could get into Cross Hall, even if they can go there at all. It would have to be completely furnished, and there is no money to furnish it."

"Wouldn't your brother——?" Lord George shook his head. "Or papa——?" Lord George again shook his head. "What will they do?"

"If it were not for our house in London we might take a place in the country together," said Lord George.

All the various facts of the proposition now made to her flashed upon Mary's mind at once. Had it been suggested to her, when she was first asked to marry Lord George, that she should live permanently in a country house with his mother and sisters, in a house of which she would not be, and could not be, the mistress, she would certainly have rejected the offer. And now the tedium of such a life was plainer to her than it would have been then. But, under her father's auspices, a pleasant, gay little house in town had been taken for her, and she had been able to gild the dulness of Manor Cross with the brightness of her future prospects. For four or five months she would be her own mistress, and would be so in London. Her husband would be living on her money, but it would be the delight of her heart that he should be happy while doing so. And all this must be safe and wise, because it was to be done under the advice of her father. Now it was proposed to her that she should abandon all this, and live in some smaller, poorer, duller country residence, in which she would be the least of the family instead of the mistress of her own house. She thought

of it all for a moment, and then she answered him with a firm voice:

"If you wish to give up the house in London we will do so."

"It would distress you, I fear." When we call on our friends to sacrifice themselves, we generally wish them also to declare that they like being sacrificed.

"I should be disappointed, of course, George."

"And it would be unjust," said he.

"If you wish it I will not say a word against it."

On that afternoon he rode into Brotherton to tell the tidings to the dean. Upon whatever they might among them decide, it was expedient that the dean should be at once told of the marriage. Lord George, as he thought over it all on horseback, found difficulties on every side. He had promised that his wife should live in town, and he could not go back from that promise without injustice. He understood the nature of her lately offered sacrifice, and felt that it would not liberate his conscience. And then he was sure that the dean would be loud against any such arrangement. The money no doubt was Mary's own money, and, subject to certain settlement, was at Lord George's immediate disposal; but he would be unable to endure the dean's reproaches. He would be unable also to endure his own, unless—which was so very improbable—the dean should encourage him. But how were things to be arranged? Was he to desert his mother and sisters in their difficulty? He was very fond of his wife; but it had never yet occurred to him that the daughter of Dean Lovelace could be as important to him as all the ladies of the house of Germain. His brother proposed to bring his wife to Manor Cross in May, when he would be up in London. Where, at that moment, and after what fashion, would his mother and sisters be living?

The dean showed his dismay at the marriage plainly enough.

"That's very bad, George," he said; "very bad indeed!"

"Of course we don't like her being a foreigner."

"Of course you don't like his marrying at all. Why should you? You all know enough of him to be sure that he wouldn't marry the sort of woman you would approve."

"I don't know why my brother should not have married a lady in England."

"At any rate he hasn't. He has married some Italian widow, and it's a misfortune. Poor Mary!"

"I don't think Mary feels it at all."

"She will some day. Girls of her age don't feel that kind of thing at first. So he is going to come over at once. What will your mother do?"

"She has Cross Hall."

"That man Price is there. He will go out, of course?"

"With notice, he must go."

"He won't stand about that, if you don't interfere with his land and farm-yard. I know Price. He's not a bad fellow."

"But Brotherton does not want them to go there," said Lord George, almost in a whisper.

"Does not want your mother to live in her own house! Upon my word the marquis is considerate to you all. He has said that plainly, has he? If I were Lady Brotherton I would not take the slightest heed of what he says. She is not dependent on him. In order that he may be relieved from the bore of being civil to his own family, she is to be sent out about the world to look for a home in her old age! You must tell her not to listen for a minute to such a proposition."

Lord George, though he put great trust in his father-in-law, did not quite like hearing his brother spoken of so very freely by a man who was, after all, the son of a tradesman. It seemed to him as though the dean made himself almost too intimate with the affairs at Manor Cross, and yet he was obliged to go on and tell the dean everything.

"Even if Price went, there must be some delay in getting the house ready."

"The marquis surely won't turn your mother out before the spring?"

"Tradesmen will have to come in. And then I don't quite know what we are to do as to the—expense of furnishing the new house. It will cost a couple of thousand pounds, and none of us have ready money." The dean assumed a very serious face. "Every spoon and fork at Manor Cross, every towel and every sheet belongs to my brother."

"Was not the Cross house ever furnished?"

"Many years ago; in my grandmother's time. My father left money for the purpose, but it was given up to my sister Alice when she married Holdenough." He found himself explaining all the little

intricacies of his family to the dean, because it was necessary that he should hold council with some one. "I was thinking of a furnished house for them elsewhere."

"In London?"

"Certainly not there. My mother would not like it, nor would my sisters. I like the country very much the best myself."

"Not for the whole year?"

"I have never cared to be in London; but, of course, as for Mary and myself that is settled. You would not wish her to give up the house in Munster Court?"

"Certainly not. It would not be fair to her to ask her to live always under the wing of your mother and sisters. She would never learn to be a woman. She would always be in leading strings. Do you not feel that yourself?"

"I feel that beggars cannot be choosers. My mother's fortune is two thousand pounds a year. As you know, we have only five thousand pounds apiece. There is hardly income enough among us for a house in town and a house in the country."

The dean paused a moment, and then replied that his daughter's welfare could not be made subordinate to that of the family generally. He then said that, if any immediate sum of money were required, he would lend it either to the dowager or to Lord George.

Lord George, as he rode home, was angry both with himself and with the dean. There had been an authority in the dean's voice which had grated upon his feelings; of course he intended to be as good as his word; but, nevertheless, his wife was his wife and subject to his will; and her fortune had been her own and had not come from the dean. The dean took too much upon himself. And yet, with all that, he had consulted the dean about everything, and had confessed the family poverty. The thing, however, was quite certain to him—he could not get out of the house in town.

During the whole of that day Lady Sarah had been at work with her mother, instigating her to insist on her own rights, and at last she had succeeded.

"What would our life be, mamma," Lady Sarah had said, "if we were removed altogether into a new world? Here we are of some use. People know us, and give us credit for being what we are. We can live after our own fashion, and yet live in accordance with our rank.

There is not a man or a woman or a child in the parish whom I do not know. There is not a house in which you would not see Amelia's and Susanna's work. We cannot begin all that over again."

"When I am gone, my dear, you must do so."

"Who can say how much may be done before that sad day comes to us? He may have taken his Italian wife again to Italy. Mamma, we ought not to run away from our duties."

On the following morning it was settled among them that the dowager should insist on possession of her own house at Cross Hall, and a letter was written to the marquis, congratulating him, of course, on his marriage, but informing him at the same time that the family would remain in the parish.

Some few days later, Mr. Knox, the agent for the property, came down from London. He had received the orders of the marquis, and would be prepared to put workmen into the house, as soon as her ladyship would be ready to leave it. But he quite agreed that this could not be done at once. A beginning no doubt might be made while they were still there, but no painting should be commenced, or building knocked down or put up, till March. It was settled at the same time that on the first of March the family should leave the house.

"I hope my son won't be angry," the marchioness said to Mr. Knox.

"If he be angry, my lady, he will be angry without a cause. But I never knew him to be very angry about anything."

"He always did like to have his own way, Mr. Knox," said the mindful mother.

CHAPTER VII. "CROSS HALL GATE."

WHILE Mr. Knox was still in the country, negotiations were opened with Mr. Price, the sporting farmer, who, like all sporting farmers, was in truth a very good fellow. He had never been liked by the ladies at Manor Cross, as having ways of his own which were not their ways. He did not go to church as often as they thought he ought to do; and, being a bachelor, stories were told about him which were probably very untrue. A bachelor may live in town without any enquiries as to any of the doings of his life; but if a man live forlorn and unmarried in a country house, he will certainly become the victim of calumny should any woman

under sixty ever be seen about his place. It was said also of Mr. Price that sometimes, after hunting, men had been seen to go out of his yard in an uproarious condition. But I hardly think that old Sir Simon Bolt, the master of the hounds, could have liked him so well, or so often have entered his house, had there been much amiss there; and as to the fact of there always being a fox in Cross Hall Holt, as a certain little wood was called about half a mile of the house, no one even doubted that. But there had always been a prejudice against Price at the great house, and in this even Lord George had coincided. But when Mr. Knox went to him and explained to him what was about to happen—that the ladies would be forced, almost before the end of winter, to leave Manor Cross and make way for the marquis, Mr. Price declared that he would clear out, bag and baggage, top-boots, spurs, and brandy-bottles, at a moment's notice. The Prices of the English world are not, as a rule, deficient in respect for the marquises and marchionesses. "The workmen can come in to-morrow," Price said, when he was told that some preparations would be necessary. "A bachelor can shake down anywhere, Mr. Knox." Now it happened that Cross Hall House was altogether distinct from the Cross Hall Farm, on which, indeed, there had been a separate farmhouse, now only used by labourers. But Mr. Price was a comfortable man, and, when the house had been vacant, had been able to afford himself the luxury of living there.

So far the primary difficulties lessened themselves when they were well looked in the face. And yet things did not run altogether smoothly. The marquis did not condescend to reply to his brother's letter; but he wrote what was for him a long letter to Mr. Knox, urging upon the agent the duty of turning his mother and sisters altogether out of the place. "We shall be a great deal better friends apart," he said. "If they remain there we shall see little or nothing of each other, and it will be very uncomfortable. If they will settle themselves elsewhere, I will furnish a house for them; but I don't want to have them at my elbow." Mr. Knox was of course bound to show this to Lord George, and Lord George was bound to consult Lady Sarah. Lady Sarah told her mother something of it, but not all; but she told it in such a way that the

old lady consented to remain and to brave her eldest son. As for Lady Sarah herself, in spite of her true Christianity and real goodness, she did not altogether dislike the fight. Her brother was her brother, and the head of the family, and he had his privileges; but they too had their rights, and she was not disposed to submit herself to tyranny. Mr. Knox was therefore obliged to inform the marquis, in what softest language he could find applicable for the purpose, that the ladies of the family had decided upon removing to the dower-house.

About a month after this there was a meet of the Brotherton Hunt, of which Sir Simon Bolt was the master, at Cross Hall Gate. The grandfather of the present Germaines had in the early part of the century either established this special pack, or at any rate become the master of it. Previous to that the hunting probably had been somewhat precarious; but there had been, since his time, a regular Brotherton Hunt associated with a collar and button of its own—a blue collar on a red coat, with B. H. on the buttons—and the thing had been done well. They had four days a week, with an occasional bye, and two thousand five hundred pounds were subscribed annually. Sir Simon Bolt had been the master for the last fifteen years, and so well known that no sporting pen and no sporting tongue in England ever called him more than Sir Simon. Cross Hall Gate, a well-loved meet, was the gate of a big park which opened out upon the road just opposite to Mr. Price's house. It was an old stone structure, with a complicated arch stretching across the gate itself, with a lodge on each side. It lay back in a semicircle from the road, and was very imposing. In old days no doubt the gate was much used, as the direct traffic from London to Brotherton passed that way. But the railway had killed the road; and as the nearer road from the Manor Cross House to the town came out on the same road much nearer to Brotherton, the two lodges and all the grandeur were very much wasted. But it was a pretty site for a meet when the hounds were seated on their haunches inside the gate, or moving about slowly after the huntsman's horse, and when the horses and carriages were clustered about on the high-road and inside the park. And it was a meet, too, much loved by the riding men. It was always presumed that Manor Cross itself

was preserved for foxes, and the hounds were carefully run through the belt of woods. But half-an-hour did that, and then they went away to Price's Little Holt. On that side there were no more gentlemen's places; there was a gorse-cover or two and sundry little spinnies; but the country was a country for foxes to run and men to ride; and with this before them, the members of the Brotherton Hunt were pleased to be summoned to Cross Hall Gate.

On such occasions Lord George was always there. He never hunted, and very rarely went to any other meet; but on these occasions he would appear mounted, in black, and would say a few civil words to Sir Simon, and would tell George Scruby, the huntsman, that he had heard that there was a fox among the laurels. George would touch his hat and say in his loud, deep voice, "Hope so, my lord," having no confidence whatever in a Manor Cross fox. Sir Simon would shake hands with him, make a suggestion about the weather, and then get away as soon as possible; for there was no sympathy and no common subject between the men. On this occasion Lady Amelia had driven down Lady Susanna in the pony-carriage, and Lady George was there, mounted, with her father the dean, longing to be allowed to go away with the hounds, but having been strictly forbidden by her husband to do so. Mr. Price was of course there, as was also Mr. Knox, the agent, who had a little shooting-box down in the country, and kept a horse and did a little hunting.

There was good opportunity for talking, as the hounds were leisurely taken through the loose belt of woods which were by courtesy called the Manor Cross Coverts, and Mr. Price took the occasion of drawing a letter from his pocket and showing it to Mr. Knox.

"The marquis has written to you!" said the agent in a tone of surprise, the wonder not being that the marquis should write to Mr. Price, but that he should write to anyone.

"Never did such a thing in his life before, and I wish he hadn't now."

Mr. Knox wished it also when he had read the letter. It expressed a very strong desire on the part of the marquis that Mr. Price should keep the Cross Hall House, saying that it was proper that the house should go with the farm, and intimating the marquis's wish that Mr. Price should remain as his neighbour.

"If you can manage it, I'll make the farm pleasant and profitable to you," said the marquis.

"He don't say a word about her ladyship," said Price; "but what he wants is just to get rid of 'em all, box and dice."

"That's about it, I suppose," said the agent.

"Then he's come to the wrong shop, that's what he has done, Mr. Knox. I've three more year of my lease of the farm, and after that, out I must go, I dare say."

"There's no knowing what may happen before that, Price."

"If I was to go, I don't know that I need quite starve, Mr. Knox."

"I don't suppose you will."

"I hain't no family, and I don't know as I'm just bound to go by what a lord says, though he is my landlord. I don't know as I don't think more of them ladies than I does of him, Mr. Knox." And then Mr. Price used some very strong language indeed. "What right has he to think as I'm going to do his dirty work? You may tell him from me as he may do his own."

"You'll answer him, Price?"

"Not a line. I hain't got nothing to say to him. He knows I'm a-going out of the house; and if he don't you can tell him."

"Where are you going to?"

"Well, I was going to fit up a room or two in the old farmhouse; and if I had anything like a lease, I wouldn't mind spending three or four hundred pounds there. I was thinking of talking to you about it, Mr. Knox."

"I can't renew the lease without his approval."

"You write and ask him, and mind you tell him that there ain't no doubt at all as to my going out of Cross Hall after Christmas. Then, if he'll make it fourteen years, I'll put the old house up and not ask him for a shilling. As I'm a living sinner, they're on a fox! Who'd have thought of that in the park? That's the old vixen from the Holt, as sure as my name's Price. Them cubs haven't travelled here yet."

So saying he rode away, and Mr. Knox rode after him, and there was consternation throughout the hunt. It was so unaccustomed a thing to have to gallop across Manor Cross Park! But the hounds were in full cry, through the laurels, and into the shrubbery, and round the conservatory, close up to the house.

Then she got into the kitchen-garden, and back again through the laurels. The butler and the gardener and the housemaid and the scullery-maid were all there to see. Even Lady Sarah came to the front door, looking very severe, and the old marchioness gaped out of her own sitting-room window upstairs. Our friend Mary thought it excellent fun, for she was really able to ride to the hounds; and even Lady Amelia became excited as she flogged the pony along the road. Stupid old vixen, who ought to have known better! Price was quite right, for it was she, and the cubs in the Holt were now finally emancipated from all maternal thralldom. She was killed ignominiously in the stokehole under the greenhouse—she who had been the mother of four litters, and who had baffled the Brotherton hounds half-a-dozen times over the cream of the Brotherton country!

"I knew it," said Price, in a melancholy tone, as he held up the head which the huntsman had just dis severed from the body. "She might 'a done better with herself than come to such a place as this for the last move."

"Is it all over?" asked Lady George.

"That one is pretty nearly all over, miss," said George Scruby, as he threw the fox to the hounds. "My lady, I mean, begging your ladyship's pardon." Someone had prompted him at the moment. "I'm very glad to see your ladyship out, and I hope we'll show you something better before long."

But poor Mary's hunting was over. When George Scruby and Sir Simon and the hounds went off to the Holt, she was obliged to remain with her husband and sisters-in-law.

While this was going on Mr. Knox had found time to say a word to Lord George about that letter from the marquis. "I am afraid," he said, "your brother is very anxious that Price should remain at Cross Hall."

"Has he said anything more?"

"Not to me; but to Price he has."

"He has written to Price?"

"Yes, with his own hand, urging him to stay. I cannot but think it was very wrong." A look of deep displeasure came across Lord George's face. "I have thought it right to mention it, because it may be a question whether her ladyship's health and happiness may not be best consulted by her leaving the neighbourhood."

"We have considered it all, Mr. Knox, and my mother is determined to stay. We are very much obliged to you. We feel that in doing your duty by my brother you are anxious to be courteous to us. The hounds have gone on; don't let me keep you."

Mr. Houghton was of course out. Unless the meets were very distant from his own place, he was always out. On this occasion his wife also was there. She had galloped across the park as quickly as anybody, and when the fox was being broken up in the grass before the hall-door, was sitting close to Lady George. "You are coming on?" she said, in a whisper.

"I'm afraid not," answered Mary.

"Oh yes; do come. Slip away with me. Nobody'll see you. Get as far as the gate, and then you can see that covert drawn."

"I can't very well. The truth is, they don't want me to hunt."

"They! Who is they? 'They' don't want me to hunt. That is, Mr. Houghton doesn't. But I mean to get out of his way by riding a little forward. I don't see why that is not just as good as staying behind. Mr. Price is going to give me a lead. You know Mr. Price?"

"But he goes everywhere."

"And I mean to go everywhere. What's the good of half doing it? Come along."

But Mary had not even thought of rebellion such as this—did not in her heart approve of it, and was angry with Mrs. Houghton. Nevertheless, when she saw the horsewoman gallop off across the grass towards the gate, she could not help thinking that she would have been just as well able to ride after Mr. Price as her old friend Adelaide de Baron. The dean did go on, having intimated his purpose of riding on just to see Price's farm.

When the unwonted perturbation was over at Manor Cross Lord George was obliged to revert again to the tidings he had received from Mr. Knox. He could not keep it to himself. He felt himself obliged to tell it all to Lady Sarah.

"That he should write to such a man as Mr. Price, telling him of his anxiety to banish his own mother from her own house!"

"You did not see the letter?"

"No; Knox did. They could not very well show such a letter to me; but Knox says that Price was very indignant,

and swore that he would not even answer it."

"I suppose he can afford it, George? It would be very dreadful to ruin him."

"Price is a rich man. And after all, if Price were to do all that Brotherton desires him, he could only keep us out for a year or so. But don't you think you will all be very uncomfortable here? How will my mother feel if she isn't ever allowed to see him? And how will you feel if you find that you never want to see his wife?"

Lady Sarah sat silent for a few minutes before she answered him, and then declared for war. "It is very bad, George; very bad. I can foresee great unhappiness; especially the unhappiness which must come from constant condemnation of one whom we ought to wish to love and approve of before all others. But nothing can be so bad as running away. We ought not to allow anything to drive mamma from her own house, and us from our own duties. I don't think we ought to take any notice of Brotherton's letter to Mr. Price." It was thus decided between them that no further notice should be taken of the marquis's letter to Mr. Price.

A FINE OLD ENGLISH GENTLEMAN.

WHEN the diary of the Right Honourable William Windham, sometime Member of Parliament for Norwich and Secretary of State for War, first saw the light, it was hailed with joy by the survivors of the good old school. Degenerate persons, who took no interest in the noble art of self-defence—so called on the same principle that a whalebone bludgeon loaded with lead is named a life-preserver—and entertained a squeamish feeling respecting bull-baiting, cock-fighting, badger-baiting, and dog-fighting, were informed that they would now have an opportunity of reading the inmost thoughts of "one of the right sort," of a buck, a blood, a dandy, a Corinthian of the Corinthians. Weak-kneed disputants, whose notion of Windham was that he occupied in his own day a very second-rate political position, and that even as an orator he was, despite the care with which he prepared his speeches, very inferior to Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Sheridan, were reminded that it was not as a politician, not as an orator, but as a man that his life was exceptionally valuable.

To the due understanding of the man Windham it is necessary to examine him from two entirely opposite points of view, on the principle advocated by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who points out that man is manifold, that he exists first as he appears to himself, then as he appears to A, B, C, and the rest of the alphabet. Seen from the outside, Windham is all the fancy of his contemporaries painted him. No man was more popular in his day. As Secretary at War, he did much towards raising the spirit and improving the position of the British soldier. Although at first the associate of Fox and Sheridan, he became a vehement anti-jacobin, and a singularly efficient instrument for raising that popular enthusiasm which finally compassed the destruction of Napoleon. Windham was most energetic in upholding a war policy, and the Heaven-sent minister was loud in his praise: "Nobody," said Pitt, according to Lord Stanhope, "can be so well meaning and so eloquent as he; his speeches are the finest productions possible; full of warm imagination and fancy." "The late Lord Lansdowne," says Mrs. Baring, "when last at Felbrigg, in 1861, remarked that Mr. Windham had the best parliamentary address of any man he had ever seen, which was enhanced by the grace of his person and the dignity of his manners." The late Lord Chief Justice Denman, upon being asked by his son-in-law, the Rev. J. Beresford, to name the best speech he had heard during his life, and that which he thought the most worthy of study, answered without hesitation, "Windham's speech on the Law of Evidence." This is high testimony to the real mental power of a man whose popularity was unbounded, and it is echoed by writers of political opinions very opposite to those of Windham. Lord Holland says: "Whatever were his weaknesses, as a speaker he was delightful. In fancy and imagery he was equal, in taste, and above all in delivery, he was far superior, to the great god of his idolatry—Mr. Burke. If his views were somewhat less comprehensive, his arguments were closer, more subtle, more perspicuous. His pride or noble spirit could occasionally supply something like vehemence or indignation, but real and earnest passion was not his forte." Of his social qualities Lord Brougham gives a striking picture: "In society he was destined to shine almost without a rival. His manners were the most polished, and noble, and courteous,

without the least approach to pride, to affection, or condescension; his spirits were, in advanced life, so gay, that he was always younger than the youngest of his company; his relish of conversation was such, that after lingering to the latest moment, he joined whatever party a sultry evening (or morning, as it might chance to prove) tempted to haunt the streets before retiring to rest. How often have we accompanied him to the door of his own mansion and then been attended by him to our own, while the streets rang with the peals of his hearty merriment, or echoed the accents of his refined and universal wit."

This is a valuable passage, as indicating what had been reflected upon the mind of the able editor of "Statesmen" by the popular opinion. Otherwise, we take it, it is worthless as a mere attempt on the part of Brougham to make believe that he was "hail fellow well met" with Windham, and the "nice derangement of epitaphs" between the "accompanied" and "attended" is too obvious not to provoke a laugh. No doubt it pleased Brougham to fancy that he had at the outset of his career been intimate with Windham. He was nothing of the kind. In 1808, Henry Brougham was yet but a man with eventualities; Windham was not only "un homme arrivé" at the height of his reputation, but was within two years of his death. He evidently hardly gave Brougham a thought. He only mentions him once as being at a male dinner—a pleasant party, by-the-way—"Present: Lord Henry (Petty), Frankland, Grattan, Sharp, Boddington, Elliot, Lawrence, Ward, Tierney, Rogers, Brougham, G. Ponsonby, Horner." This is all Windham tells us of Brougham. The latter's sketch, however, is corroborated by a thousand witnesses, and by the record kept by Windham himself of his dinings and junketings. No man apparently lived more in the full glare of publicity. He was always dining out, and meeting people, and wherever he went, made a favourable impression. Doubtless, some of his brilliancy, his dash, and vigour, his chivalrous bearing, and elegant manner, were inherited from his father, Colonel Windham, who had lived much abroad, having entered the Hungarian hussars in the days of Maria Theresa. There are still extant treatises on the art of war by this valiant soldier, and there is a print of him in his double-jacketed hussar

uniform, looking very handsome and dashing indeed, a species of well-bred Murat. He was an excellent horseman and swordsman, slightly made, but athletic. He was fond of every kind of adventure, and in company with Pococke, in 1741, penetrated some of the higher valleys of the Alps, and ascended Mont Blanc. He delighted in theatricals; Garrick and others were his constant guests. He was a very good classical scholar, besides being well acquainted with French, German, and Spanish. From this gallant cavalier and Sarah Hicks, the widow of Robert Lukin, of Dunmow, sprang William Windham, born in Golden-square, then a fashionable place of residence, on the 3rd May, 1750.

Windham, left a minor endowed with abundant wealth, was naturally sent to Eton, and the record he has left of his studies during his manhood gives a singular idea of the range of knowledge imparted in his day at that seat of learning. While yet a very young man he came to London to enjoy himself, and had the exceeding good taste and good fortune to forgo with Dr. Johnson and other members of the club, at which through life he was a punctual attendant. It was, in fact, at the instigation of Dr. Johnson that he kept the diary, which constitutes not the least of the obligations of posterity to the famous doctor. He was evidently a species of pet or protégé of Dr. Johnson, who, like all sensible old people, liked clever young people. There was much about Windham to captivate the sturdy but soft-hearted doctor. He was remarkably handsome, was brave, strong, and active, gracious in manner, and supple—his enemies always held—far too supple, in wit. Dr. Johnson took kindly to him, and being nothing if not didactic, impressed upon this gilded butterfly the necessity for self-culture and improvement, urging him at the same time to keep a diary, and record therein his work and his reflections. It would seem that, before Windham set out for Ireland as secretary to Lord Northington, then lord-lieutenant, he "expressed to the sage some modest and virtuous doubts, whether he could bring himself to practise those arts which, it is supposed, a person in that situation has occasion to employ." Johnson at once "shut down" on this over-sensitiveness with, "I have no great timidity in my own disposition, and am no encourager of it in others. Never be afraid to think yourself fit for anything for which your friends

think you fit. No one in Ireland wears even the mask of incorruption. No one professes to do for sixpence what he can get a shilling for doing;" and added, "You will become an able negotiator; a very pretty rascal. Every day will improve another. Dies diem docet, by observing at night where you failed in the day, and by resolving to fail so no more."

Thus encouraged, Windham commenced his experience of official life. How he carried out the practice of self-examination recommended by Johnson, without the slightest idea that it would be carried to an unhealthy extreme, is seen in his diary, which gives us the inner side of the man Windham. Outside he was, as we have seen, the most popular man of his day, and to judge by the evidence of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Hoppner, and Sir Thomas Lawrence, a goodly man to look upon at any age. His essentially noble type of face lost nothing by years. A fine high forehead, clear-cut aquiline nose, a well-shaped mouth, and a chin which by its firm outline belied his character, are features which stand wear and tear well enough in all cases. In his earlier portrait by Reynolds, however, there is somewhat of the worn look we should expect to find upon the countenance of the "self-torturing sophist." Handsome as the face is, looking out over a high-collared coat of black velvet and a voluminous shirt-frill, it yet has the weary, worried look of a dissatisfied man.

The cause of this weary look is to be found in his system, long persisted in, of self-examination. In sympathy with Burns he exclaims, "What a pity it is that a man cannot for a while stand at a distance from himself, and behold his own person, manner, behaviour, and character, with the eyes of a stranger. What a pity that no one can see himself as he is seen by everybody else. It is from this impossibility that one meets people everyday who are as perfect strangers to their own characters as a man would be to his own countenance who had never seen the reflection of it in a mirror." Nevertheless he determined for his own part to endeavour to get over the impossibility, and to construct in similar fashion to a "map of the planets"—that is to say from partial and occasional observation, a map, as it were, of his own mind. His dominant idea was that of self-culture, and that that praiseworthy pursuit may be so frantically undertaken as to become a perpetual torture is abundantly proved by his diary. He

appears—at least in the earlier section of it, written when he was between thirty-four and forty years of age—to have been perpetually harassing himself concerning his irresolution or want of application, and reproaching himself with wasted opportunities. The same kind of reproach has probably smitten every man of nimble mind, but it was reserved for Windham to put upon paper with equal but far less revolting candour than Rousseau, the record of how the morning's amusements did not bear the evening's reflection.

Dipping into the diary commenced in 1784, we at once find that Johnson's exhortation towards self-culture and self-examination had produced an extraordinary effect, and also gain a curious insight into the species of reading deemed of an improving character by the immediate disciples of "the sage." Windham goes out on a winter morning and buys copies of Doletus, Petavius, and Theodorus—authors whose very names are now absolutely forgotten. On the next day he goes skating, an exercise which appears to have afforded him amusement at all times. We next meet him at the play, with the wife of his half-brother, Mr. Lukin—whose children, by-the-way, inherited the name and fortune of the Windhams. It is, perhaps, well to mention that not a single drop of Windham blood flowed in the veins of the gentleman on whom the famous commission de lunatico inquirendo was held some years ago. We have seen that Windham's mother had been previously married. Mrs. Henry Baring tells us that from great personal love to the late Admiral Lukin, his nephew by half-blood through his mother, he left him the whole of his property, on the condition of his taking the name of Windham, and then left the property in remainder to the head of his family, the late George O'Brien, Earl of Egremont. Admiral Windham had six sons—the eldest married Sophia, youngest daughter of the first Marquis of Bristol. They had one son, by whom the Felbrigg estate, which had been held by the Windhams since 1461, was sold.

Windham was a diligent playgoer. One night we find him "in the pit with Mrs. Lukin," to see Mrs. Siddons as Mrs. Beverley; after "Measure for Measure," again seen from the pit, he goes with Miss Kemble into Mrs. Siddons's dressing-room. He is perpetually calling on Mrs. Siddons and Miss Kemble, varying his society by dropping in on Fox afterwards,

and having Burke, Horsley, and Sir Joshua Reynolds to dine with him, after which Miss Kemble and Mrs. Siddons come in. When the company is all gone the host emits a groan—"Have not seen Dr. Johnson since 19th ult.; that is, to present day inclusive, nineteen days." Next day he takes himself seriously to task. To appreciate the curious mental attitude of the man and the polite studies of his age, we must bear in mind that he had, at the time he began to write his diary, already arrived at the watershed of life—a gentleman of rank and fortune, and of "wit and pleasure upon town." He bewails that from the commencement of his diary to the moment of writing, a space of five weeks and four days, except on one morning, and then only for an hour, "no attempt had been made to resume mathematics; no Latin written; little read; no Greek looked into; no translation; no progress made in any author; nothing but a little odd information collected, of history, physiology, and biography." To very ordinary men of this age, who shuffle off the coil of the differential calculus before they are twenty, it is very curious to observe the brilliant wit and orator of the last age, studying the elements of mathematics in middle life. The age of Windham was not so long ago. He died in 1810, at the age of sixty, and must, therefore, have been personally known to many persons now living. The tremendous pace at which the world has advanced since George the Third was king, deceives us as to the actual measure of time. Compared with other historical spaces, it is but yesterday that Windham—already a member of parliament and a man of fashion—sat in his study, trying to get through Euclid. He tried to read Petavius, by-the-way, one morning, and then went out, a proceeding which seems always to have proved fatal to his industry for the rest of the day. His indecision was wonderful. He starts out—after lying in bed for two hours, reflecting on the advantage of early rising—with the intention of skating; but, after calling in Leicester-fields, for the purpose of proposing to Mrs. Siddons to go, and passing a quarter of an hour with Sir Joshua, goes to Grosvenor-square. He is often in company with George Lukin, his half-brother on the mother's side, afterwards Dean of Wells, and his wife, née Katharine Doughty. His affection for this lady was very sincere; she is, indeed, the only woman

mentioned with any tenderness in his diary. Then he sets off to Felbrigg, and tackles Petavius again, and makes tremendous efforts to go on with his translation of Thuanus, as he and Dr. Johnson are pleased to call De Thou. Next comes a very characteristic memorandum: "Saw a tight battle at the corner of Russell-street." This is the key-note of a certain harmony which runs through Windham's entire diary. He never missed a prize-fight; the attraction of Dr. Johnson's society and that of Mr. Burke was undoubtedly great, and he was never tired of squiring Mrs. Lukin about; but all these occupations were set aside if a prize-fight were to the fore. Down at Felbrigg he rose about eight, and at times walked before breakfast, taking Horace with him, reciting an ode or two, and returning home to breakfast and logarithms. He chronicles with some pride his progress in mathematics, discusses the merit of a hat-tax, reads Pitt's India Bill, goes to see Miss Kemble in "The Guardian," and after the play goes to Bolt-court to leave his compliments with Johnson. In town he cannot find time for mathematics, and complains constantly of what he calls the "feel," a species of hypochondriacal attack to which he was subject. Nothing can be at once more strange and interesting than this complaint of the man about town of a "feel." That he was fractious at times, as an intellectual sybarite is wont to be, is put on record; and on one occasion he deplores his having said more than he ought to Mrs. Lukin, probably on account of her husband's stupidity in bringing his hulking boy to breakfast, to "stuff him with chocolate and spoil their conversation." The slightest matter regarding Mrs. Lukin always affected him profoundly, albeit he was not demonstrative as a rule about women. Of his own marriage, not perpetrated till he had reached the age of forty-eight, he tells us nothing. There is not a line of love or courtship, hopes or fears; the first mention of his changed state being of a discouraging nature. A fortnight after his wedding, his wife, Cecilia Forrest, is alluded to as follows: "August 2nd, 1798. Drawing-room. Presentation at dinner. Lady Palmerston, Lady Mary Fordyce, Malone, who came in by chance. Lady M. stayed till late. Cecy, when I came down, had singed her feathers. Slight ill-humour." Despite her faculty for singeing people, Cecy seems to have been a most excellent wife to her eccentric

husband, and to have been almost as popular as himself. She was a particular friend of the queen and the princesses, and apparently made Windham as happy as it was in his nature to be. He was an intense lover of novelty, and never rested until he had been up in a balloon and under fire at the siege of Valenciennes. The oddest effect is produced by his doubts of his own courage—he being really one of the bravest of men. He dragged a mutinous militiaman with his own hands to the guardhouse, and stood at the door of it with his drawn sword, confronting alone a rush of the prisoner's comrades to the rescue with fixed bayonets. For moral courage he was equally conspicuous, yet he is perpetually analysing and anatomising his mind and body, counting his pulse while he is up in a balloon, and calculating how long it will take him to become perfectly calm under fire. Brave himself, he loved courage and endurance in men and animals. Perhaps the most eccentric, if not the most famous, of his speeches is that in defence of bull-baiting. According to Windham, those who did not like bull-baiting were either Jacobins or Puritans. Methodists hated bull-baiting as they hated all moral amusements, and Jacobins, eager to give the lower orders a character of seriousness and gravity, discouraged what they chose to consider as idle pastimes. Bull-baiting occasioned excess, but so did horse-racing. "He did not object to the practice of horse-racing, since there were so many individuals to whom it was a source of pleasure. But he might be allowed to remind the House of the observation of Dr. Johnson, who had expressed his surprise at the paucity of human pleasures, when horse-racing constituted one of the number. To horse-racing he was no more a personal enemy than to boxing; though in making this observation he was far from wishing to disparage boxing so far as to put them on an equal footing, or to insinuate that so poor, mean, and wretched an amusement as the one, was at all to vie in importance with the other, which is connected with ideas of personal merit and individual dignity."

He ridiculed the idea of cruelty as equally derogatory to the bull, the dogs, and the spectators. "He believed the bull felt a satisfaction in the contest, not less so than the hound did when he heard the sound of the horn which summoned him to the chase. If the bull felt no pleasure, and was cruelly dealt with, surely the dogs had

also some claim to compassion; but the fact was, that both seemed equally anxious in the conflict; and the bull, like every other animal, while it had the better side did not appear to feel unpleasantly; it would be ridiculous to say he felt no pain; yet when on such occasions he exhibited no sign of terror it was a demonstrable proof that he felt some pleasure."

He was a keen critic of the art pugilistic. In 1787 he dines with Malone, and then goes to Tothill-fields, where he "between six and seven saw, very commodiously from a dray, a smart battle between Jack Joseph—a soldier, who showed upon his back floggings which he had received to a distinguished amount—and one Hardy, I think a carpenter." In the following year we find him squiring dames, but never losing a fight. Thus he was present at the fight between Fewtrill and Jackson, and, in fact, at every great boxing-match of his day.

On the 12th June, 1791, he spent a happy day in his own peculiar fashion. Being at Bath, he "went to the Abbey Church. Walked after church with Wilberforce, who had arrived the night before, and whom I called upon as he was at supper—our conversation on religious subjects. He adopts, as I understand, the Trinitarian doctrine, but not in any absurd way. I had settled with Mrs. Lukin to go to Marlborough in the evening, but having in the meanwhile met with Elliot, he prevailed upon me to stay that evening, to which indeed I was further inclined by having received intelligence of a boxing-match that was to take place on the Tuesday." The "mill" came off, he tells us, in a very quiet manner, without crowd or noise, and he enjoyed himself very much. Once, and once only, he records his being weak enough to give up a prize-fight for another amusement. On the 1st April, 1792, he says: "I let myself foolishly be drawn by Boswell to explore, as he called it, Wapping, instead of going, when everything was prepared, to see the battle between Ward and Stanyard, which turned out a very good one, and would have served as a very good introduction to Boswell."

In June, 1805, when at the height of his fame and power, no influence was strong enough to wean him from his favourite pastime. On the evening of the 4th he left Lady Lambert's masquerade in Argyle-street early, with a view of going with Lord Albemarle to the fight between Belcher and Ryan; and on the 20th went to Black-

water with Horner, Ward, Ponsonby, and Kinnaird, to see Pearce, the Game Chicken, and Gully, T. Belcher and Dutch Sam, and Ryan and Caleb Baldwin fight; but these great events did not come off; the fight that actually took place, being between "Cribb and Nicholl, with a petite pièce between a Jew and a jackass-driver."

It is difficult to imagine that this amateur of prize-fights could be the same man who, in the privacy of his own library, took himself severely to task for want of application and incapacity for continuous thought; who was fastidious, not to say squeamish, as to the company he met, and whose delicate taste protested against the presence of that jovial warbler Captain Morris in a Twickenham villa; "that he was not here in his element, and afforded to me a strong proof how much particular performances depend for their effect on circumstances." It is, again, very difficult to reconcile Windham on a dray, witnessing a pugilistic encounter in Tothill-fields, with Windham reproving a waterman, "but not enough," for boasting of cruelties practised on seals "under notion of fun." But neither of these affords a more remarkable contrast than the gay, the gallant, the witty Windham, as he appeared to others, and the hard student demanding of himself a rigid account of the employment of every day, and losing his life at last from an injury received, neither in battle nor in duel, but in the attempt to save a friend's library from the flames.

LETHE.

ADOWN the slumberous land one river flows,
Slow, silent, under light of stars or sun,
Falling from a far land that no one knows,
To a great sea where all the streams are one.

A bloom of lilies lies upon its breast,
Whose cold roots grasp the sunless slime below;
Never hath passion broken on their rest,
Nor amorous tear dropt on their loveless snow.

What time the sun throws wide his golden door,
And kindles peak on peak to amethyst,
A sigh breathes o'er those woods of sycamore,
And through the twinkling tree-tops trails the mist.

Rolling through listening glens that stream shall
glide,

Weeping, those ghosts shall stand upon the shore,
And sorrow with oblivion shall abide,
Till stream, and sea, and mountain be no more.

THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

"WHETHER it was from a desire of not exposing me to temptation, or whether from a wish to be more free in his own movements, I cannot say, but Harry took

me no more to sleep at Mr. Pickering's. When I was up there with him in the daytime, as I sometimes was, the roulette-board would not be brought out, and I was always sent on board to sleep. For the most part I used to remain there all day, learning my duty, as Harry said; and a better man to learn it under than John Mackenzie, our first mate, you would not find 'twixt there and here.

"No doubt it was feeling such thorough confidence in him that enabled Harry to be so much away from his ship. Sometimes days would pass without our seeing him. Then he would pull off in a canoe or in Mr. Pickering's whaleboat, full of life and spirits, and be all over the ship, examining all that was being done, and complimenting Mackenzie on the way the work was performed, and have him and the second mate into the cabin to drink a bottle or two of champagne to the success of the Helen Macdonald. Then when they were gone on deck again he would give me a playful pull of the ear, and lug out a whole handful of coins and chink it up laughingly before he stowed it away in the box where he kept all his winnings.

"There, Dick, you young rascal,' he would say, 'there's another ten, or twenty, or thirty pound,' as it might be, 'and the half of it's yours, you know, honour bright.'

"Mackenzie, the mate, looked rather grave at all this. He was a remarkably quiet, steady-going fellow, smart at his work, but little given to talking, and always fonder of jumping aloft and showing the men how to do anything they might be going wrong in himself, than of standing on the quarter-deck and swearing at them for not knowing how to do it. He was a bit of a Puritan too, with it all, and looked upon anything like gambling as at least an eighth deadly sin. He was not much on shore, as you may suppose. But once or twice he had to go on business, and then he heard something of what went on at Mr. Pickering's bungalow, and evidently didn't like it. Once he even went so far as privately to remonstrate with his captain. But Harry, good-natured as he was, was not at all the sort of person to take a liberty with, and told him good-humouredly but plainly to mind his own business.

"Which you understand better than most men, Mackenzie,' he said, not wanting to wound him; 'and do it better than most men too, as I'll take care the owners hear when we get home.'

"But Mackenzie felt that he had been snubbed, and there was a little coolness between them from that time.

"This sort of thing went on for about a fortnight. Then one day Harry came on board not quite so gay as usual. He went through the ship, overhauled the work, and complimented Mackenzie, as before; but there wasn't quite the same 'go' about it all, and when at last he went into the cuddy without the customary invitation to the mates, I saw that Mackenzie looked more serious than commonly, while Sherley, the second mate, a coarse, disagreeable fellow, stuck his tongue in his cheek and grinned.

"'Nothing for the box this time, Dick,' said Harry, when we got inside. 'But never mind, young 'un; it's only a passing squall. We'll soon get it back again.'

"That evening, instead of putting money into the box, he took thirty or forty pounds out of it; telling me, as he went, that it was all right, and that he'd bring back a whole pocketful next time.

"But next morning he was aboard again before eight bells, and this time he said nothing to anybody, but just strode straight to his cabin, went in, slamming the door to behind him, and two minutes after came out again, his teeth very tightly clenched, and with rather an ugly frown on his face, and throwing himself into the whaleboat, which was waiting alongside, pulled on shore again without so much as casting his eye aloft, where the rigging of the new foretopmast was just being finally set up.

"When he was fairly gone I took up the money-box and shook it. It was empty!

"That night he slept on board for the first time for a week; or, rather, remained on board, for I don't believe he slept a wink or even so much as turned in at all. I know when I dropped off he was pacing up and down the cuddy, muttering to himself, and every now and then, as he passed, dashing his hand angrily against the mizenmast or one of the bulkheads; and when I awoke he was on deck, and his eyes were bloodshot, and his bunk was undisturbed, as though no one had lain in it all night.

"'No more roulette for me, Dick,' he said, trying to laugh it off, as we sat at breakfast.

"And all that day he kept his word, and didn't even go on shore, but stayed on board looking after the men, though it was only in a half-hearted sort of way

after all. That night, too, he slept on board, and I noticed that he drank a great deal more grog than usual, and toppled into his bunk at last rather more than one sheet in the wind.

"Next day, however, he still held fast to his resolution, and when towards evening Mr. Pickering himself came off to see, as he said, what had become of him, his reception of his visitor was at first very cool—so much so that nine men out of ten would have taken offence and pulled ashore again.

"Mr. Pickering, however, was not the man to take offence when it suited his purpose to do otherwise, and presently poor Harry's stiffness began to wear off, and they grew more friendly again. By-and-by Mr. Pickering made some excuse to get me out of the way, and I was sent on deck while they remained talking and smoking in the cuddy.

"It must have been about half an hour afterwards when Mackenzie, wanting Harry's opinion about something, sent me down again with a message. In that hot weather I was rather given to kicking off my shoes and going about, like the men, barefoot. Harry and Mr. Pickering were both sitting with their backs towards the cuddy door, and at first neither saw nor heard me, and as I made my way along the saloon to where they sat I heard Pickering say:

"'I'll find the money, man. You're to have a thousand pounds for getting the ship safe home, aren't you?'

"'Yes,' said Harry. 'But she isn't home yet, and——'

"'Never mind,' interrupted the other, 'it's good enough for me. I'll lend you five hundred on the chance, and then—— What the' —— are you sneaking about here for, youngster?'

"I repudiated the charge of sneaking about, and after a few sharp words he recovered himself and apologised. Then I gave my message, got my answer, and went on deck again. Half an hour after Mr. Pickering and Harry followed, and after a few words with Mackenzie went on shore. We never saw either of them again till the ship was ready to sail.

"Then, to our astonishment, and to Mackenzie's intense disgust, we learned that Mr. Pickering was coming with us, leaving his partner to manage affairs in the islands while he went to open relations with a few good houses at home. He brought his wheel with him, of course, and

his first proceeding was to send for the carpenter, and have a sort of frame made for it, slung on gimbals, so that the motion of the ship should not interfere with it, and the little devil of a ball was soon running round as merrily as ever. The sailors took a great interest in it, amusements being rather scarce things on board, and wanted to borrow it, that old Chips might make one for the forecastle. But this Harry wouldn't have. Meanwhile they christened Mr. Pickering 'The Man at the Wheel,' and were always looking out for the chance of a good look at it.

"We soon had a taste of the luck it was to bring us.

"Being all right now aloft, and the native divers having got off a good deal of the grass from her bottom, Harry had determined to lose no more time, but to get right away to the southward, where we might expect strong westerly winds, that would carry us clear round the Horn.

"She was still pretty well flying light, and had to be handled gingerly on a wind, or she might easily turn turtle altogether. There's a deal of talk nowadays about overloaded ships, and I don't mind owning now that I should have been none the uncasier in my own mind for the last twenty-four hours if we'd had say a hundred tons or so less iron on board the old Queen. But there's danger in being under-loaded too; and though we'd filled all our tanks and casks, and got in something in the way of ballast too, she wanted careful looking after; and more than once I heard some of the older hands in the forecastle growl out that it was lucky the mate was a seaman, for now the skipper had got his gambling machine he didn't seem to care much whether the ship went overboard or not.

"Well, at first we were a good deal baffled by light winds, but before very long we got a nice steady breeze from the north-westward, and went bowling away before it with our mainsail hauled up and stunsails aloft and aloft on both sides.

"We didn't go in for quartermasters, like some of your big passenger-ships nowadays, that seem to think you can turn yourself into a frigate by just touching your hat to the quarterdeck. All our A B's took their trick at the wheel in turn, and being picked men, most of them could steer about as small as you pleased. Of course, however, there were one or two among them that weren't quite so handy at it as the others, and about the worst

of the lot was a man of the name of Thompson. Not, indeed, but what he could steer well enough when he had a mind. But he was always gaping about, watching anything that might be doing on deck or aloft, and with an eye anywhere but on the compass or the weather-leach of the maintopgallant-sail.

"Being so light as she was, the Helen, though she walked away before it in fine style, took, of course, a deal of steering, especially now when there was a long rolling swell just under her weather-quarter. I heard Mackenzie caution Thompson as he went to the wheel.

"'Just mind your hand, my man,' he said, 'and don't let the ship get yawing half-a-dozen points off her course, as you did the other day, or you'll have her broaching to, as sure as your name's Thompson.'

"They were the last words I ever heard him speak.

"Something called me below, and when I came on deck about half an hour afterwards I missed him from the poop. I soon saw where he was, however. One of the men was fitting a strop to a block on the weather mainyard-arm, and something in his way of going to work had offended poor Mack's fastidious eye. The boatswain was busy on the forecastle, and besides that, Mackenzie was never much troubled with quarterdeck notions; so away he'd gone up the main-rigging, and when I got sight of him there he was, outside the man, sitting astride of the heel of the stunsail-boom, and, marlinespike in hand, showing the fellow how the job ought to be done.

"Thompson was still at the helm, of course, and for once he seemed to be looking at the binnacle. Perhaps the presence of the captain kept him to his work, for there on the after-skylight sat Harry and Mr. Pickering, with the infernal wheel of course between them.

"Harry seemed to be winning again today. At all events he was all alive and merry again, and instead of sending me off about my business, as he had been used to do of late—sometimes with a flea in my ear—whenever I came near them at their game, looked up at me with a nod and a laugh, and threw a sovereign on to the red with an air of triumph.

"I stood there and watched. The game fluctuated, of course. Sometimes my heart would come up into my mouth as I saw Harry's little pile of sovereigns grow less and less. Then the luck would turn again,

and red—he always seemed to play on red—would begin to win, and I would breathe easily once more.

"Suddenly there was a loud cry from forward, a heavy lurch, a long thundering flap from all the sails, and looking up, as Harry and Mr. Pickering and I all went with a crash on to the hencoops to leeward, I got a glimpse of Thompson, with his face as white as a sheet, heaving the wheel up with all his might.

"But it was too late now. Snap—snap—snap went the stu'n-sail-booms, like so many carrots. The spreading canvas dropped and fell like the broken wing of a bird. Luckily both fore and maintop-gallant-sheets went, and the masts were saved. But the ship had fairly broached-to, and for the time was quite unmanageable, rolling and tumbling about so that you could hardly keep your feet on deck, and threatening every moment to roll the spars out of her.

"And in the midst of the confusion came another cry.

"'Man overboard!'

"It was poor Mack. The boom had gone from under him at the same moment that the heavy stu'n-sail had struck him down. We saw him rise once, but could do nothing for him. Even could any of the men have been taken from their work without risking the loss of the ship, in the way she was then tumbling about no boat could have been got into the water. We got her steady at last, and then not a moment was lost. But long before that all chance was gone; and though the boat pulled backwards and forwards, as near as they could judge over the place where he had gone down, for an hour at least, nothing more was ever seen of poor Mackenzie.

"I shall never forget Harry's face when, the wreck being cleared, the mainyard filled again, and the ship got once more before the wind, the man Thompson was brought before him.

"He did not wait to be questioned.

"'I'll tell your honour the truth,' he said, 'if I swing for it—as I ought to do. It was all my fault, your honour. I was a-looking at that there confounded wheel, and let the ship broach-to, and poor Mr. —,' and then something seemed to get into the great bearded fellow's throat, and he dashed his huge brown paw across his eyes and broke off short.

"At first Harry did not seem to understand him.

"'Looking at the wheel, you scoundrel?' he cried. 'Why—'

"'No, no, sir,' interrupted the man, shaking his head. 'It wasn't my wheel I was a-thinking of, I wish it had been, it was your'n.' And he pointed to the broken roulette, which lay in one corner of the cuddy.

"I thought Harry would have fallen from his chair. He did not answer a word, but just signed to the men to clear the cuddy, and when he came on deck again an hour or more later he looked at least ten years older. Thompson was sent to his duty again; the second mate, Sherley, was put into poor Mackenzie's place; a young fellow, a sort of connection of one of the junior partners of the house, who had shipped nominally as third mate to put in his time, was made second; and things went on as before.

"Not quite in every way, though. Sherley made a very different chief officer from Mackenzie, and the work of the ship wasn't carried on in the way it had been. It did not make so much difference, however, at first, for Harry gave his whole time to the ship now, and was captain and mate too. Mr. Pickering had got the carpenter to tinker up the roulette again, but Harry wouldn't so much as look at it.

"'Never again, Pickering,' he said, pushing it aside so roughly that it almost fell from the table again. 'That infernal wheel has put a good man's life on my shoulders, and nearly lost the ship already. I'll never touch it again, I swear.'

"And for three weeks he kept his oath. We were down in the strong weather now, and it wasn't till we were well round the Horn that there was much slack time for any of us. Then the wind fell light again, and Harry began to get restless.

"As for Mr. Pickering, he seemed to trouble himself mighty little about what had happened. The roulette was all he cared about, and he'd go on twirling it round and round, and making believe to back this side or that, and calling out to Harry every now and again to come and see how the game was running.

"'Look here, Corbett,' he'd say, 'hang me if red hasn't turned up thirteen times following. You'd have punished me a bit over that, my boy, wouldn't you?'

"At first Harry wouldn't listen to him, but would get up and go away. But it seemed to come harder to him every time. And he began to drink rather heavily.

"Then one day, when he had drunk

best part of a bottle of rum, and Pickering had been chaffing him a good bit about the chances he was throwing away, and telling him how if he had only been backing the red for the last three days he'd have won a thousand pounds at least, he gave a little half-tipsy laugh, tossed off a tumbler of pretty nearly raw spirits, and pulling a handful of sovereigns out of his pocket, where he had been fidgeting and fumbling with them for the last half hour, ranged up alongside of the infernal wheel, and sat down to play once more.

"They played all that night, and by morning he had won two hundred pounds. Then they turned in for an hour or two. But in the evening they went at it again, and played all night and best part of next day. And still the luck stuck to him.

"But with the next night it turned again. What with the play and what with the drink, Harry was thoroughly excited now, and played like a madman. The more the game went against him the more he piled on his stakes, and before morning he had lost every sixpence, not only of his winnings but of the five hundred pounds he had borrowed of his opponent at first leaving the islands.

"And a lucky thing it would have been for him and for all of us if he had stopped there. But the fellow who had tempted him on to it all had no idea of letting him go so easily. I didn't at the time understand what it meant when I came upon him once or twice with the paper in his hand that I recognised for the bond—a bottomry bond they call it, securing money on the ship herself—that had been given him in payment of the work done in the islands, and urging Harry to do something which he said would be 'as safe as houses,' but which Harry wouldn't listen to, seeming indeed at first quite indignant at the suggestion.

"But the devil of play had got a firm hold of him now, and he did not resist long. It was only that same night that I saw Sherley, who had the middle watch, looking down through the cuddy skylight, evidently spying upon something that was going on below. The light from the cabin lamp shone upon his face, and I could see his grin of malicious delight. I slipped into the cuddy to warn Harry that he was being watched, and found him and Pickering with the bond open upon the table before them, and a pen still between Harry's fingers. But before I could speak, they both turned upon me so angrily that

I was glad to make my escape at once, and when I regained the deck Sherley was gone.

"And now the ship seemed going to the dogs altogether. The carpenter had got the model of the roulette when it went to him for repair, and had rigged up a rough imitation of it, and now there was gambling in the fore-castle as well as in the cabin, and very soon quarrelling and fighting too. Discipline was pretty well at an end. It was as much as most of the men would do to execute the simplest order, whilst as for Sherley he kept watch or not just as it pleased him; and the ship was left to look after herself. Even Harry himself was aroused by what went on, and took Sherley sharply to task.

"The fellow laughed insolently in his face.

"'It isn't quite correct, Captain Corbett,' he said, looking him straight in the face; 'but it's not quite murder, is it?—nor forgery neither?'

"I expected, of course, to see Harry knock the mutinous rascal down, but to my astonishment he neither moved nor spoke—except that he staggered as if he had himself been struck. Sherley stood looking in his face for a few moments, then laughed again more insolently than before, and turning on his heel walked away.

"That night the end came. The barometer had been falling all day, and the sky clouding over. As evening drew on the wind began to freshen, and by midnight she was close-hauled on the star-board tack, and with quite as much as she could do in her present trim to carry her three topsails. Sherley had again the middle watch, and came on deck grumblingly at close upon two bells, to relieve the second mate, who was very glad to get below. Sherley—as, I believe, more than half drunk—took two or three turns up and down the poop, shook himself, swore that it was infernally cold and that he wasn't going to humbug about on deck all night, and quietly went below again. As soon as he was safely below, the watch on deck made their way back, laughing and chaffing one another, into the fore-castle, lighted a big lantern, got out their 'gambling machine,' and went to work. With the exception of the man at the wheel, the only soul on the alert in the ship besides myself was Thompson, on whom the loss of poor Mackenzie seemed to have made a lasting impression, and who was now almost the only steady hand on board.

"Meanwhile the weather thickened, and away to windward a heavy and fast-gathering bank of cloud showed that a severe squall would soon be on us. Already the light ship was every now and then burying her lee channels in the water, and it was clear that with a very little more she would be in imminent danger of capsizing.

"She'll never be able to face that squall, sir; not with the canvas she's carrying now," said Thompson. 'It's no good trying anything with Mr. Sherley. He's had another pull at the rum bottle, and wouldn't wake not if you was to cut him down by the head. And as for t'other chap, he's but a boy; and if he knew what to do—which he don't—the men wouldn't heed him. For the Lord's sake go in and rouse out Captain Corbett, or we shall all be in kingdom come before the next watch is called.'

"I made my way into the cuddy, where the infernal wheel was going still.

"What the devil do you want?" asked Harry, angrily.

"But I had no time to reply. Even as I opened my mouth to speak the squall struck her, and she was over in a moment. Then, even above the loud cries of sailors, the howling of the squall, and the crashing of the cabin furniture as it dashed against the bulkheads of the leeward cabins, came a more ominous and terrifying sound than all, the heavy rumbling noise which told us that cargo and ballast had 'shifted' and gone bodily over to leeward. And then the water came pouring in at the lee cuddy door, and we knew that the ship was hopelessly on her beam-ends.

"Without a word we scrambled to our feet and rushed, walking on the bulkheads and holding on by the table, which hung above us as though lashed to the side of a wall, to the starboard door, which was still free. I remember how Pickering tried to shove me on one side in his own hurry to gain the deck, and how poor Harry flung him back and, getting a firm grip of my waistbelt, hoisted me right up to the starboard poop-ladder before even attempting to free himself.

"And a fearful sight it was. The lantern, by the light of which the men had been gambling in the fore-castle, had fetched away into one of the bunks and set it on fire. But nobody heeded it in presence of the still more pressing danger on deck, and the fast-spreading flames only served to light up the scene. Some of the crew

had already been washed, or had fallen, overboard. The rest—many of them half-naked, just as they had been roused from their berths—were scattered about, struggling madly, some with axes, some with their knives, some with no better aid than their bare hands or teeth, to get some of the boats or spars adrift before the ship should go from under them, as it was clear she would before many minutes should have passed.

"For it was not merely that she was on her beam-ends, and with her cargo shifted; for hopeless as such a strait would have been, she might even thus have kept above water for some days to come, and given us at least a chance for our lives. But in the general want of discipline and disorganisation of the last few weeks, not only had the hatches been left unsecured, but more than one of the lower deck ports was wide open, and the water was pouring in with a roar, which told but too clearly how short a time she had to swim.

"As I struggled on to the poop-ladder a hand seized me by the collar, and Thompson hauled me up and thrust into my hand the end of a stout lanyard, which he had already made fast to one of the large hencecoops. But I still clung to the poop-rail.

"The captain! the captain!' I cried; and Thompson quitted his hold and clambered down to lend Harry also a hand.

"But he was too late. Even as he left me, I could see the man Pickering come climbing out of the cuddy door, close by where Harry stood with one foot on the combings of the main-hatch, holding on by some of the gear that hung streaming from the rigging, and shouting his orders to the men at work upon the booms.

"Just then the fire from the fore-castle broke out with a strong, steady glare, which fell upon them both. I could see the expression of Harry's face, and the fury that flashed from his eyes, as at the sight of the new-comer he suddenly broke off in the middle of an order, and turned upon him.

"Curse you!' he screamed in a voice that seemed to pierce my very ears, even above all the horrible din. 'This is your work.'

"And with one powerful spring his hands were on Pickering's throat.

"The next moment they disappeared together in the waves that were already fast engulfing the ship. The next, the ship itself sank from under us. Thompson

had barely time to cut the last lashing of the hencoop, almost losing his own hold in his anxiety to secure me, and the Helen Macdonald was gone, and the few out of her crew who were not dragged with her to the bottom were buffeting for their lives with the wild waters.

"Of all the three-and-thirtysouls, gentlemen, who sailed in her from Hobson's Bay, only Thompson and I escaped to tell the tale. We drifted about on that hencoop without food or drink, until at last, more dead than alive, we were picked up by a Brazilian brig and taken into Rio. And now, gentlemen, I don't think you'll wonder at my saying that never shall one of those accursed wheels do its infernal work in any ship that I command."

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCESILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER V. A DUEL.

"SPEAK to me?" said Clari. "Ah, I remember you now. You are the ecclesiastic of the little sick girl. I hope she is well?"

"Bessy is quite well, thank you. In fact, there was never any cause for anxiety—but Bessy, my wife, was alarmed; we only have one, and mothers will be mothers, you know."

"Yes. A mother does not like to lose her only child. But it is not all fathers who feel that, monsieur. I am glad your little one is well. You wish to speak to me?"

"If you don't mind. But first I have to thank you for your most munificent gift to——"

"Bah! It is a bagatelle. Mr. Gordon and I were looking at milord's cucumbers. Do you love cucumbers, monsieur? Cucumber salad is good—but with some little onions, it is divine."

And her beautiful eyes lighted up with so much enthusiasm, that Walter Gordon thought her in the needful mood for killing and painting.

"I know that gratitude is an insult to charity," said the curate, feeling that he had said a good thing, and making a mental note of it for a future occasion. "But, nevertheless, a poor parish must be excused for being grateful, and so must I. And I will show it in the way you seem to prefer—by asking another favour."

Clari shrugged her shoulders.

"Tre mendicanti fanno uno frate—

Three beggars make one priest," Walter heard her murmur. "I am not rich, monsieur."

"Oh, it is not that, indeed. Could I speak to you indoors? It is a matter of charity in a way, but not of alms."

"Ah, that is another matter. But see—I put out both my hands, before I hear. If it is to sing—no. I am amusing myself, here at Hinchford."

"To sing?" said the curate, looking a little bewildered at such an idea on the part of his noble cousin. He knew she was an amateur of the first water, but did not know the favourite ambition of amateurs which shows itself in assuming that they are more professional than the profession. "Who would think of such a thing?"

"People think, because I sing a little, I have only to be asked; that is all, monsieur. And you would have to get leave of Prosper. But if it is not to sing, that is the better. We will walk to the house. Well, monsieur?"

"You don't know March, the organist of the cathedral?"

"I have not the honour, monsieur."

"Of course you know him by name. Well, it's a sad case. He's gone stone deaf——"

"Ah, I know. Come on to the house; I shall send her some bank-notes, to buy her a sewing-machine. I will not hear her, monsieur! Corpo di Bacco. No!"

"You know the case, then?"

"I know? Yes; I know. I know to-day, from—— And, what I said then, I say now. I will not hear. She shall have a sewing-machine."

"Will you pardon me? The father is about to lose his situation. The daughter has been educated for the musical profession, and has the very best of characters. She has great ability, I believe. I thought, if you would, you could recommend her——"

"I have said it. No. I am not like every woman, I. 'No' is 'no' with me."

"But, may I ask why?"

"Certainly. It is because I please. That is my reason for all things; it is enough, and it saves time. Ask Prosper; he knows."

"I thought——"

"But, tell me, is she so beautiful, this girl?"

"She is nice-looking—very nice-looking, indeed; but a little peculiar—rather foreign style. She has been so long abroad."

"She knows Monsieur Gordon. No?"
 "I believe so."

"She must be charming, this girl, to make all the men care for her. A girl who can do that wants no help from me. She is born under a good star. Make her my compliments, monsieur."

"You will not see her, then? I'm sorry for that. I made so sure you would take an interest in musical people."

"I detest musical people. They are humbugs, what you call—all of them. I am one myself, I know."

"I made so sure that I brought her here to introduce her to you. But I suppose it's no use now?"

"She is here?"

"I left her in the drawing-room when I came out to look for you. I was told you were about the grounds. It would be a real charity—but of course if you——"

"I will see her. I should like to see a girl who can make all the men care for her."

"Who deserves all men's care," said the curate, gravely. He was beginning to think less and less of Cousin Alicia, and to doubt the value of an introduction to her on the part of a young and innocent girl.

"Who gets it?" said Clari sharply.

Assuredly both Walter Gordon and Reginald Gaveston were sad blunderers. There was excuse enough for the latter, but the former at least should have known—had he really known anything of Clari—that every sign of interest taken in a rising star, however obscure as yet, was gall to the woman whose youth was passing, and to the prima donna whose sun was passing its noon. Walter Gordon had been her slave at Hinchford—and what woman likes to fancy that she is losing a slave? If it was as true as she had declared in her morning's passion that her life was so unloved and unlovely, if she had been building at least a cottage in the air on the foundation of a young man's sympathy, the existence of a young and beautiful rival was a harsh discovery. Poor Celia! What would she have thought had it been revealed to her that Mademoiselle Clari was jealous of her about Walter Gordon?

She had been left alone by Gaveston in the white drawing-room while he went to find her future patroness, Lady Quorne. Her conscience was at ease in this matter. Destiny had driven her to take her career into her own hands, if only to save her father from finding the workhouse itself the end of the road to an artist's glory. There

was certainly no livelihood open to her in Deepweald, and even she knew enough to know that in London, without aid, she would be but a drop of rain in the ocean.

Naturally all her thoughts turned to the only friend she had ever known, Herr Walter aus Lindenheim. And him and his aid she had forsworn—not because her heart had obeyed, but just, in effect, because it is impossible to reason with a man who is stone-deaf by means of a scrap of music-paper and a pencil. She had not been put to the grand test of obedience, by having to meet Herr Walter in the street and to turn her back upon him.

And now, thanks to Mr. Swann, she was about to be enrolled among the protégées of that distinguished amateur, the Countess Quorne. The result of an introduction was certain. Whatever Lady Quorne's eccentricities might be, however much beer she might popularly be supposed to drink at The Five Adzes in Laxton—and the reputed quantity was already computed in quarts—all the world, in and out of Deepweald, knew her for a constant and eager friend of art and artists, and ready to help even the most undeserving who came to her with the cachet of an eye for colour or an ear for song. And one word from her was enough to open a career, whether for a teacher or concert singer. It was better to make a début at Quorne House in Park-lane than at a public festival. Celia was nervous when she entered the lodge-gates of Hinchford, but not afraid. The pupil of John March, the star of Lindenheim, knew that she could sing, and she was not going to let her father starve because she was shy.

But it seemed to her that her guide and friend, the curate of St. Anselm's, was a long time gone, and waiting tries the nerves. She made the tour of the sunshiny pictures that hung round the walls, looked at the view of the deer-park from the window, and wondered at the magnificence, the like of which she had never seen. Surely the Queen could not have finer furniture than Lady Quorne, who amused herself by playing skittles at public-houses.

At last, however, she heard the sound of voices coming towards the door—one was the curate's, the other a lady's, clear and bright, with a foreign tone in it, but not such as to remind her of the Lindenheim Babel. The door opened, and she saw—Lady Quorne? No——

Mademoiselle Clari.

Never, since that eventful afternoon of

the concert, had she forgotten her lodestar. Years had passed since then—she was years older—but the divine Clari was still the divine Clari; not a day older since she stood smiling royally on the stage in the Shire Hall, looking to Celia like the very incarnation of song. Yes, there was Mademoiselle Clari, in the flesh, off the boards—she and no other; the one woman on earth whose very name her father hated, and for hearing whom she had been expelled and exiled to Lindenheim. What fate had brought her into the very presence of this glorious demon? How could she write when she went home, “Father, I have seen Mademoiselle Clari?”

Her heart beat fast—strangely, unreasonably fast, it seemed to her. She had heard many voices at Lindenheim, but none like Clari’s; many ways of singing, but none like hers. And yet she knew her for the arch-enemy of art—had not her father said so?

As she blushed and trembled before the great prima donna, she suddenly felt the eyes of Mademoiselle Clari turn full upon her with a long, penetrating gaze, that gave her actual pain.

“This is Miss March,” said Gaveston.

“Yes,” said Clari, opening her fan, and not holding out her hand.

“I wish you would hear her sing.”

“I am told you wish to go on the stage?” said Clari, sharply.

“No—not on the stage,” said Celia, feeling as on the first day at Lindenheim, only without a Herr Walter to come chivalrously to the aid of a shy girl.

“To be a singer, then? You would look well on the stage, though. Can you sing?”

“I have learned, madame.”

“That is something—not many people learn. Where have you studied? In Naples—in Milan?”

“At Lindenheim.”

“Ah, among the German pigs. Yes, I remember. It is a bad school. If you wish to sing you must go to the land of song, mademoiselle. I am not going to hear you, so you need not be afraid of me. I have told Monsieur Gordon, I have told your friend here, I tell you—I will help nobody. And since you learned among those pigs, that decides me. They are artists there. Why do you want to sing, mademoiselle? It is great folly of you.”

“My father—I want to help him, if I can.”

“Well, it is something not to say for art, mademoiselle. If you say for diamonds,

I believe; if you say art, I do not believe. I sing for diamonds—I.”

The curate of St. Anselm’s stared at Cousin Alicia. Celia looked with bewilderment at Mademoiselle Clari. Was this the Countess of Quorne? Could this be the Queen of Song?

“But you say to help your father. That is a bad reason, mademoiselle; that will not make you sing. There are only three ways; you must love diamonds, or you must love somebody, or you must hate somebody. Then, if you have got a voice, you will sing. But, by teaching? No. That is why you must learn in Italy. They love and they hate there. Have your ever loved, mademoiselle?”

Celia reddened. There was just enough consciousness about her to keep her from the full blush of those to whom love is merely a name.

“No? Then you must begin. I sing for—diamonds. But, no; you would not love diamonds, and you could not hate if you tried. So you must love somebody, mademoiselle. No; not your father. Have you a mother?”

“No, madame.”

“She is dead? Very well. Yes; she is pretty,” said Clari, audibly, to Gaveston. Then she played a little with her fan, gravely. “Do not blush, my good girl; you will have to hear that often, if you go on the stage. You will hear more than that, if you have ears. You can turn a head—with eyes. You are not like the English girls. Mademoiselle—I think—I would like to hear you sing. But, first, you shall hear me.”

Celia knew that her duty bade her turn suddenly ill—anything that might serve as a pretext for leaving the room. If it had been a sin against art to hear the great prima donna in a concert-room, this was worse a hundred times. But what was she to do? And she was conscious of a fascination that would have kept her there, had she been able to do anything.

“Prosper accompanies me,” said Clari, “but he is not here. So I will sing without him. It is right you should hear what you will have to do.”

“Miss March can accompany you,” said Gaveston. Celia looked at him in desperate protest—but was it not part of the hopes of her friends that she would be able to make herself useful to Lady Quorne? And here was an unexpected chance of displaying her accomplishments not to be thrown away.

But Clari opened the grand piano and herself sat down to it, without accepting the offer. And then, without prelude or preparation, she dashed at once into a song in dance measure that Celia did not know—some Tuscan or Neapolitan song, full of laughter and tune, such as can never be approached by any composer with a known name. Whatever he may be in poetry, in music the great Anon stands first, without a rival. A scholar can make harmony, a solitary genius may create melody; but it takes a whole people to turn a heart into a song.

Why did Clari sing there and then? She sang as if she were bent on crushing the heart out of the girl at once, by showing her what none but herself could ever hope to do. Diamonds must be inspiration, thought Celia, if this is what they mean. She felt herself carried away—not by the song, but by the singer. It was the Shire Hall all over again. And there seemed something especially sympathetic to herself in this clear, strong soprano, with a rich softness and depth in it that does not belong to the soprano by ordinary right of nature. The words were nothing—some boatman's conceit about the eyes of his mistress, the flower-girl, being like stars, or something equally original. But Clari found passion in it, and made others find it too. After all, there is nothing in music, poetry, or painting that goes beyond what means just simply "I love you," in any language under heaven; all song comes to that, and where that is, a Clari may find scope for what she will. "I love you," sang the boatman to the flower-girl; and the giants whom Celia had worshipped at Lindenheim could say no more. And there are two ways even of saying "Your eyes are like stars." Clari sang as if the boatman felt the star-beams waltzing through his heart and veins.

"Bravo!" said the curate of St. Anselm's. "Thank you very much indeed."

Clari turned to Celia, and saw her eyes filled with tears. Celia had never been so moved since that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon in the Shire Hall.

The prima donna rose from the piano with a calm smile. "And now, mademoiselle, I should like to hear you sing."

"Oh no, madame. I did not come to sing to you," said Celia. She had come to satisfy a countess; not to compete with Clari. Was it true she must love or hate before she could sing with her soul?

"No? Do not be afraid. I want to

hear. If you can cry yourself, you can make others cry. I only want you to see. That was not singing—that was only some little tricks. You could not make art do that, *Corpo di Bacco!*"

Celia was not looking at Gaveston, or she would have seen bewilderment even greater than her own creeping down even to the point of his longest whisker. She was thinking of her father and—well, it was true that Clari had not sung in the strict sense of John March or even according to the classic traditions of Lindenheim. It was just a heart-burst; and yet she knew, by some instinct, that Clari had no more felt her own passion than she felt Celia's wonder. It was glorious; but she felt the pain that some illusions give when they fade away.

"If I can make people laugh and cry, what shall I want with art to make them sleep?" said Clari, scornfully. "Art is humbug, my good girl. It is what the people make that do not know the ways; when one has no voice and bad eyes, then she is artist—*Gran Dio!* When a man is stupid, then they call him wise. I have learned that long ago—you shall learn it now. You have good eyes, mademoiselle. If you have the voice, and can make them love you and give you diamonds—then sing; if you are artist, then—sew. Let me hear if you have the voice, mademoiselle."

Celia wished that the floor of the white drawing-room would yawn open and engulf her. She to sing after Clari—to exhibit her pure style to the contempt of a genius who had so cynically avowed herself a charlatan? She felt she could die sooner. But she did not yet know Mademoiselle Clari. Even as she had fascinated the gamekeeper at The Five Adzes, so she now charmed Celia by her will-compelling eyes.

John March's daughter moved to the piano as a bird moves to a cobra, while Clari smiled encouragement in a way that did not encourage. But, as she struck a first timid chord, pride came to her. She was there to represent Lindenheim and the old masters before the enemy. Humble as she was, she was not so humble as David compared with Goliath; and, in any case, she was there, no longer to show herself off, but to assert a cause.

The second chord was bolder. She hurriedly ran over her repertoire in her mind; and, by way of asserting her cause, chose a stiff, formal song by an old Italian master—one of those she knew by heart

long before she had ever heard of Mademoiselle Clari. It was graceful, but as quaintly formal and old-fashioned as the Minuet de la Cour. Her voice was not to be compared to Clari's, but it was sweet, and pure, and, strange to say, with some of those richer notes that distinguished Clari from all other sopranis.

At first, the great prima donna smiled indifferently. Then a little scornfully. Then the smile left her face; then her eyebrows drew together, and her fan stopped waving. Gaveston watched her, and saw in her growing attention a favourable sign. Celia—must be making a good impression on Cousin Alicia after all.

But presently the frown deepened; her cheeks began to turn pale, and her lips to tighten. She sat as rigid as a statue. Had Walter Gordon been there, he would have added a new mood to his collection of her expressions. By-and-by, the fan began to flutter fiercely and quickly again.

Celia knew she was singing well, and her voice, which at first had trembled a little with excitement, grew in power. She somehow felt engaged in a duel, in which she was fighting for the right, though the wrong might win. No passion was to be drawn from her song—only the purest grace, and the delicate aroma, so to speak, of pot-pourri. Clari's song was a heart-burst; this, a subtle dream, with a thread of gossamer running through—nothing, unless sung. And Celia sang.

She did not rise from the piano nor turn round, when the last note was held till it died.

"Bravo!" said the curate.

But in a moment she felt a clutch upon her shoulder.

"You have not learned at Lindenheim!" burst out the prima donna. "Whoever says that, he lies. Ab, you have learned of Andrew Gordon!"

Celia's shoulder was bruised by the tightness of the grasp; her ears vibrated with the sudden fierceness of the words.

"Yes—of Andrew Gordon! I know—Dio lo sa! That is he—every note. You have his very changes, that he made for—yes, Andrew Gordon, or Satan, mademoiselle. Gran Dio! Has that demon found two women in the world?"

"Giulia," said a stout and handsome lady, still on the right side of middle age, who just then entered the room, "what

mysterious concert is this going on? Why did you send me no invitation—especially as we have a débutante—and a very charming one, it seems," she said, glancing at Celia, and pausing politely for an introduction. "Why, Reginald, are you here, too? Is—is this—Mrs. Gaveston?"

"What—Cousin Alicia!" stammered the curate.

"What is the matter?" asked the lady, observing, but not noticing, the thunder on the face of the prima donna. "Of course, I'm your Cousin Alicia. I was so sorry you couldn't stay to dinner the other day. Won't you introduce me to Mrs. Gaveston?"

"This isn't Mrs. Gaveston," blundered the curate. "This is Miss March—I wanted you to hear her sing."

"And you've done better, if you have got Mademoiselle Clari to hear her. And now I'm here, she can't do better than sing again—if you will favour me, Miss March, that is to say. Are you any relation to Mr. March, of Deepweald? One of the finest musicians in England," she said, turning to Clari. "You'd better stay to lunch, Reginald, and be introduced to Lord Quorne; and you too, Miss March. I'm jealous, Giulia—you never let me hear you sing."

Celia was wrapped in bewilderment, the curate in confusion, Clari in absent thought. Lady Quorne thought that Hinchford must have suddenly ceased to be her own, and have become possessed by the winds; for she might as well have spoken to the winds as to her three visitors.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER VIII. PUGSBY BROOK.

THERE was great talking about the old vixen as they all trotted away to Cross Hall Holt;—how it was the same old fox that they hadn't killed in a certain run last January, and how one old farmer was quite sure that this very fox was the one which had taken them that celebrated run to Bamham Moor three years ago, and how she had been the mother of quite a Priam's progeny of cubs. And now that she should have been killed in a stokehole! While this was going on a young lady rode up alongside of Mr. Price, and said a word to him with her sweetest smile.

"You remember your promise to me, Mr. Price?"

"Surely, Mrs. Houghton. Your nag can jump a few, no doubt."

"Beautifully. Mr. Houghton bought him from Lord Mountfencer. Lady Mountfencer couldn't ride him because he pulls a little. But he's a perfect hunter."

"We shall find him, Mrs. Houghton, to a moral; and do you stick to me. They generally go straight away to Thrupp's larches. You see the little wood. There's an old earth there, but that's stopped. There is only one fence between this and that, a biggish ditch, with a bit of a hedge on this side, but it's nothing to the horses when they're fresh."

"Mine's quite fresh."

"Then they mostly turn to the right for Pugsby; nothing but grass then for four miles ahead."

"And the jumping?"

"All fair. There's one bit of water,—Pugsby Brook,—that you ought to have, as he'll be sure to cross it ever so much above the bridge. But, lord love you, Mrs. Houghton, that horse'll think nothing of the brook."

"Nothing at all, Mr. Price. I like brooks."

"I'm afraid he's not here, Price," said Sir Simon, trotting round the cover towards the whip, who was stationed at the farther end.

"Well, Sir Simon, her as we killed came from the Holt, you know," said the farmer, mindful of his reputation for foxes. "You can't eat your cake and have it too, can you, Sir Simon?"

"Ought to be able in a cover like this."

"Well, perhaps we shall. The best lying is down in that corner. I've seen a brace of cubs together there a score of times." Then there was one short, low, dubious bark, and then another a little confirmed. "That's it, Sir Simon. There's your 'cake.'"

"Good hound, Blazer," cried Sir Simon, recognising the voice of his dog. And many of the pack recognised the well-known sound as plainly as the master, for you might hear the hounds rustling through the covert, as they hurried up to certify to the scent which their old leader had found for them. The Holt though thick was small, and a fox had not much chance but by breaking. Once up to covert and once back again the animal went, and then Dick, the watchful whip, holding his hand up to his face, holloed him away. "Gently, gentlemen," shouted Sir Simon, "let them settle. Now, Mr. Bottomley, if you'll only keep yourself

a little steady, you'll find yourself the better for it at the finish." Mr. Bottomley was a young man from London, who was often addressed after this fashion, was always very unhappy for a few minutes, and then again forgot it in his excitement.

"Now, Mr. Price," said Mrs. Houghton, in a fever of expectation. She had been dodging backwards and forwards, trying to avoid her husband, and yet unwilling to leave the farmer's side.

"Wait a moment, ma'am; wait a moment. Now we're right; here to the left." So saying Mr. Price jumped over a low hedge, and Mrs. Houghton followed him, almost too closely. Mr. Houghton saw it, and didn't follow. He had made his way up, resolved to stop his wife, but she gave him the slip at the last moment. "Now through the gate, ma'am, and then on straight as an arrow for the little wood. I'll give you a lead over the ditch, but don't ride quite so close, ma'am." Then the farmer went away, feeling, perhaps, that his best chance of keeping clear from his too loving friend was to make the pace so fast, that she should not be able quite to catch him. But Lady Mountfencer's nag was fast too, was fast and had a will of his own. It was not without a cause that Lord Mountfencer had parted with so good a horse out of his stable. "Have a care, ma'am," said Price, as Mrs. Houghton cannoned against him as they both landed over the big ditch; "have a care, or we shall come to grief together. Just see me over before you let him take his jump." It was very good advice, and is very often given; but both ladies and gentlemen, whose hands are a little doubtful, sometimes find themselves unable to follow it. But now they were at Thrupp's larches. George Scruby had led the way, as becomes a huntsman, and a score or more had followed him over the big fence. Price had been going a little to the left, and when they reached the wood was as forward as anyone.

"He won't hang here, Sir Simon," said the farmer, as the master came up; "he never does."

"He's only a cub," said the master.

"The Holt cubs this time of the year are nigh as strong as old foxes. Now for Pugsby."

Mrs. Houghton looked round, fearing every moment that her husband would come up. They had just crossed a road, and wherever there was a road, there, she thought, he would certainly be.

"Can't we get round the other side, Mr. Price?" she said.

"You won't be any better nor here."

"But there's Mr. Houghton on the road," she whispered.

"Oh-h-h!" ejaculated the farmer, just touching the end of his nose with his finger, and moving gently on through the wood. "Never spoil sport," was the motto of his life, and to his thinking it was certainly sport, that a young wife should ride to hounds in opposition to an old husband. Mrs. Houghton followed him, and as they got out on the other side, the fox was again away. "He ain't making for Pugsby's after all," said Price to George Scruby.

"He don't know that country yet," said the huntsman. "He'll be back in them Manor Cross woods. You'll see else."

The park of Manor Cross lay to the left of them, whereas Pugsby and the desirable grass country away to Bamham Moor were all to the right. Some men, mindful of the big brook and knowing the whereabouts of the bridge, among whom was Mr. Houghton, kept very much to the right, and were soon out of the run altogether. But the worst of it was that though they were not heading for their good country, still there was the brook, Pugsby Brook, to be taken. Had the fox done as he ought to have done, and made for Pugsby itself, the leap would have been from grass to grass; but now it must be from plough to plough, if taken at all. It need hardly be said that the two things are very different. Sir Simon, when he saw how the land lay, took a lane leading down to the Brotherton road. If the fox were making for the park he must be right in that direction. It is not often that a master of hounds rides for glory, and Sir Simon had long since left all that to younger men. But there were still a dozen riders pressing on, and among them were the farmer and his devoted follower,—and a gentleman in black.

Let us give praise where praise is due, and acknowledge that young Bottomley was the first at the brook,—and the first over it. As soon as he was beyond Sir Simon's notice he had scurried on across the plough, and being both light and indiscreet, had enjoyed the heartfelt pleasure of passing George Scruby. George, who hated Mr. Bottomley, grunted out his malediction, even though no one could hear him. "He'll soon be at the bottom of that," said George, meaning to imply

in horsey phrase that the rider, if he rode over ploughed ground after that fashion, would soon come to the end of his steed's power. But Bottomley, if he could only be seen to jump the big brook before anyone else, would have happiness enough for a month. To have done a thing that he could talk about was the charm that Bottomley found in hunting. Alas, though he rode gallantly at the brook and did get over it, there was not much to talk about; for, unfortunately, he left his horse behind him in the water. The poor beast going with a rush off the plough, came with his neck and shoulders against the opposite bank, and shot his rider well on to the dry land.

"That's about as good as a dead 'un," said George, as he landed a yard or two to the right. This was ill-natured, and the horse, in truth, was not hurt. But a rider, at any rate a young rider, should not take a lead from a huntsman unless he is very sure of himself, of his horse, and of the run of the hounds. The next man over was the gentleman in black, who took it in a stand, and who really seemed to know what he was about. There were some who afterwards asserted that this was the dean, but the dean was never heard to boast of the performance.

Mrs. Houghton's horse was going very strong with her. More than once the farmer cautioned her to give him a pull over the plough. And she attempted to obey the order. But the horse was self-willed, and she was light; and in truth the heaviness of the ground would have been nothing to him had he been fairly-well ridden. But she allowed him to rush with her through the mud. As she had never yet had an accident she knew nothing of fear, and she was beyond measure excited. She had been near enough to see that a man fell at the brook, and then she saw also that the huntsman got over, and also the gentleman in black. It seemed to her to be lovely. The tumble did not scare her at all, as others coming after the unfortunate one had succeeded. She was aware that there were three or four other men behind her, and she was determined that they should not pass her. They should see that she also could jump the river. She had not rid herself of her husband for nothing. Price, as he came near the water, knew that he had plenty to do, and knew also how very close to him the woman was. It was too late now to speak to her again,

but he did not fear for his own horse if she would only give him room. He steadied the animal a yard or two from the margin, as he came to the headland that ran down the side of the brook, and then took his leap.

But Mrs. Houghton rode as though the whole thing was to be accomplished by a rush, and her horse, true to the manner of horses, insisted on following in the direct track of the one who had led him so far. When he got to the bank he made his effort to jump high, but he had got no footing for a fair spring. On he went, however, and struck Price's horse on the quarter so violently as to upset that animal, as well as himself.

Price, who was a thoroughly good horseman, was knocked off, but got on to the bank as Bottomley had done. The two animals were both in the brook, and when the farmer was able to look round, he saw that the lady was out of sight. He was in the water immediately himself, but before he made the plunge he had resolved that he never again would give a lady a lead, till he knew whether she could ride.

Mr. Knox and Dick were soon on the spot, and Mrs. Houghton was extracted. "I'm blessed if she ain't dead," said the whip, pale as death himself. "Hush!" said Mr. Knox; "she's not dead, but I'm afraid she's hurt." Price had come back through the water with the woman in his arms, and the two horses were still floundering about unattended. "It's her shoulder, Mr. Knox," said Price. "The horse has jammed her against the bank under water." During this time her head was drooping, and her eyes were closed, and she was apparently senseless. "Do you look to the horses, Dick; there ain't no reason why they should get their death of cold." By this time there were a dozen men round them, and Dick and others were able to attend to the ill-used nags. "Yes; it's her shoulder," continued Price. "That's out, any way. What the mischief will Mr. Houghton say to me when he comes up?"

There is always a doctor in the field,—sent there by some benignity of Providence,—who always rides forward enough to be near to accidents, but never so forward as to be in front of them. It has been hinted that this arrangement is professional rather than providential; but the present writer, having given his mind to the investigation of the matter, is inclined to

think that it arises from the general fitness of things. All public institutions have, or ought to have, their doctor; but in no institution is the doctor so invariably at hand, just when he is wanted, as in the hunting-field. A very skilful young surgeon from Brotherton was on the spot almost as soon as the lady was out of the water, and declared that she had dislocated her shoulder.

What was to be done? Her hat had gone; she had been under the water; she was covered with mud; she was still senseless, and of course she could neither ride nor walk. There were ever so many suggestions. Price thought that she had better be taken back to Cross Hall, which was about a mile and a half distant. Mr. Knox, who knew the country, told them of a side gate in the Manor Cross wall, which made the great house nearer than the Cross Hall. They could get her there in a little over a mile. But how to get her there? They must find a door on which to carry her. First a hurdle was suggested, and then Dick was sent galloping up to the house for a carriage. In the meantime she was carried to a labourer's cottage by the roadside on a hurdle, and there the party was joined by Sir Simon and Mr. Houghton.

"It's all your fault," said the husband, coming up to Price as though he meant to strike him with his whip. "Part of it is, no doubt, sir," said Price, looking his assailant full in the face, but almost sobbing as he spoke, "and I'm very unhappy about it." Then the husband went and hung over his wife; but his wife, when she saw him, found it convenient to faint again.

At about two o'clock the cortège with the carriage reached the great house. Sir Simon, after expressions of deep sorrow, had of course gone on after his hounds. Mr. Knox, as belonging to Manor Cross, and Price, and, of course, the doctor, with Mr. Houghton and Mr. Houghton's groom, accompanied the carriage. When they got to the door all the ladies were there to receive them. "I don't think we want to see anything more of you," said Mr. Houghton to the farmer. The poor man turned round and went away home alone, feeling himself to be thoroughly disgraced. "After all," he said to himself, "if you come to fault, it was she nigh killed me, not me her. How was I to know she didn't know nothing about it?"

"Now, Mary, I think you'll own that I

was right," Lord George said to his wife, as soon as the sufferer had been put quietly to bed.

"Ladies don't always break their arms," said Mary.

"It might have been you as well as Mrs. Houghton."

"As I didn't go, you need not scold me, George."

"But you were discontented because you were prevented," said he, determined to have the last word.

CHAPTER IX. MRS. HOUGHTON.

LADY SARAH, who was generally regarded as the arbiter of the very slender hospitalities exercised at Manor Cross, was not at all well pleased at being forced to entertain Mrs. Houghton, whom she especially disliked; but, circumstanced as they were, there was no alternative. She had been put to bed with a dislocated arm, and had already suffered much in having it reduced, before the matter could be even discussed. And then it was of course felt that she could not be turned out of the house. She was not only generally hurt, but she was a cousin also. "We must ask him, mamma," Lady Sarah said. The marchioness whined piteously. Mr. Houghton's name had always been held in great displeasure by the ladies at Manor Cross. "I don't think we can help it. Mr. Sawyer"—Mr. Sawyer was the very clever young surgeon from Brotherton—"Mr. Sawyer says that she ought not to be removed for, at any rate, a week." The marchioness groaned. But the evil became less than had been anticipated by Mr. Houghton's refusal. At first he seemed inclined to stay; but after he had seen his wife he declared that, as there was no danger, he would not intrude upon Lady Brotherton, but would, if permitted, ride over and see how his wife was progressing on the morrow. "That is a relief," said Lady Sarah to her mother; and yet Lady Sarah had been almost urgent in assuring Mr. Houghton that they would be delighted to have him.

In spite of her suffering, which must have been real, and her fainting, which had partly been so, Mrs. Houghton had had force enough to tell her husband that he would himself be inexpressibly bored by remaining at Manor Cross, and that his presence would inexpressibly bore "all those dowdy old women," as she called the ladies of the house. "Besides, what's the use?" she said; "I've got to lie here

for a certain time. You would not be any good at nursing. You'd only kill yourself with ennui. I shall do well enough, and do you go on with your hunting." He had assented; but finding her to be well enough to express her opinion as to the desirability of his absence strongly, thought that she was well enough, also, to be rebuked for her late disobedience. He began, therefore, to say a word. "Oh Jeffrey! are you going to scold me?" she said, "while I am in such a state as this!" and then again she almost fainted. He knew that he was being ill-treated, but knowing also that he could not avoid it, he went away without a further word.

But she was quite cheerful that evening when Lady George came up to give her her dinner. She had begged that it might be so. She had known "dear Mary" so long, and was so warmly attached to her. "Dear Mary" did not dislike the occupation, which was soon found to comprise that of being head-nurse to the invalid. She had never especially loved Adelaide De Baron, and had felt that there was something amiss in her conversation when they had met at the Deanery; but she was brighter than the ladies at Manor Cross, was affectionate in her manner, and was at any rate young. There was an antiquity about everything at Manor Cross, which was already crushing the spirit of the young bride.

"Dear me! this is nice," said Mrs. Houghton, disregarding, apparently, altogether the pain of her shoulder; "I declare, I shall begin to be glad of the accident."

"You shouldn't say that."

"Why not, if I feel it? Doesn't it seem like a thing in a story that I should be brought to Lord George's house, and that he was my lover only quite the other day?" The idea had never occurred to Mary, and now that it was suggested to her, she did not like it. "I wonder when he'll come and see me. It would not make you jealous, I hope."

"Certainly not."

"No, indeed. I think he's quite as much in love with you as ever he was with me. And yet he was very, very fond of me once. Isn't it odd that men should change so?"

"I suppose you are changed too," said Mary, hardly knowing what to say.

"Well,—yes,—no. I don't know that I'm changed at all. I never told Lord George that I loved him. And what's more, I never told Mr. Houghton so. I

don't pretend to be very virtuous, and of course I married for an income. I like him very well, and I always mean to be good to him; that is if he lets me have my own way. I'm not going to be scolded, and he need not think so."

"You oughtn't to have gone on to-day, ought you?"

"Why not? If my horse hadn't gone so very quick, and Mr. Price at that moment hadn't gone so very slow, I shouldn't have come to grief, and nobody would have known anything about it. Wouldn't you like to ride?"

"Yes; I should like it. But are not you exerting yourself too much?"

"I should die if I were made to lie here without speaking to anyone. Just put the pillow a little under me. Now I'm all right. Who do you think was going as well as anybody yesterday? I saw him."

"Who was it?"

"The Very Reverend the Dean of Brotherton, my dear."

"No!"

"But he was. I saw him jump the brook just before I fell into it. What will Mr. Groschut say?"

"I don't think papa cares much what Mr. Groschut says."

"And the bishop?"

"I'm not sure that he cares very much for the bishop either. But I am quite sure that he would not do anything that he thought to be wrong."

"A dean never does, I suppose."

"My papa never does."

"Nor Lord George, I daresay," said Mrs. Houghton.

"I don't say anything about Lord George. I haven't known him quite so long."

"If you won't speak up for him, I will. I'm quite sure Lord George Germain never in his life did anything that he ought not to do. That's his fault. Don't you like men who do what they ought not to do?"

"No," said Mary, "I don't. Everybody always ought to do what they ought to do. And you ought to go to sleep, and so I shall go away." She knew that it was not all right,—that there was something fast, and also something vulgar, about this self-appointed friend of hers. But though Mrs. Houghton was fast, and though she was vulgar, she was a relief to the endless gloom of Manor Cross.

On the next day Mr. Houghton came,

explaining to everybody that he had given up his day's hunting for the sake of his wife. But he could say but little, and could do nothing, and he did not remain long. "Don't stay away from the meet another day," his wife said to him; "I shan't get well any the sooner, and I don't like being a drag upon you." Then the husband went away, and did not come for the next two days. On the Sunday he came over in the afternoon and stayed for half an hour, and on the following Tuesday he appeared on his way to the meet in top-boots and a red coat. He was, upon the whole, less troublesome to the Manor Cross people than might have been expected.

Mr. Price came every morning to enquire, and very gracious passages passed between him and the lady. On the Saturday she was up, sitting on a sofa in a dressing-gown, and he was brought in to see her. "It was all my fault, Mr. Price," she said immediately. "I heard what Mr. Houghton said to you; I couldn't speak then, but I was so sorry."

"What a husband says, ma'am, at such a time, goes for nothing."

"What a husband says, Mr. Price, very often does go for nothing." He turned his hat in his hand, and smiled. "If it had not been so all this wouldn't have happened, and I shouldn't have upset you into the water. But, all the same, I hope you'll give me a lead another day, and I'll take great care not to come so close to you again." This pleased Mr. Price so much that, as he went home, he swore to himself that, if ever she asked him again, he would do just the same as he had done on the day of the accident.

When Price the farmer had seen her, of course it became Lord George's duty to pay her his compliments in person. At first he visited her in company with his wife and Lady Sarah, and the conversation was very stiff. Lady Sarah was potent enough to quell even Mrs. Houghton. But later in the afternoon Lord George came back again, his wife being in the room, and then there was a little more ease. "You can't think how it grieves me," she said, "to bring all this trouble upon you." She emphasised the word "you," as though to show him that she cared nothing for his mother and sisters.

"It is no trouble to me," said Lord George, bowing low. "I should say that it was a pleasure, were it not that your

presence here is attended with so much pain to yourself."

"The pain is nothing," said Mrs. Houghton. "I have hardly thought of it. It is much more than compensated by the renewal of my intimacy with Lady George Germain." This she said with her very prettiest manner, and he told himself that she was indeed very pretty.

Lady George,—or Mary, as we will still call her, for simplicity, in spite of her promotion,—had become somewhat afraid of Mrs. Houghton; but now, seeing her husband's courtesy to her guest, understanding from his manner that he liked her society, began to thaw, and to think that she might allow herself to be intimate with the woman. It did not occur to her to be in any degree jealous,—not, at least, as yet. In her innocence she did not think it possible that her husband's heart should be untrue to her, nor did it occur to her that such a one as Mrs. Houghton could be preferred to herself. She thought that she knew herself to be better than Mrs. Houghton, and she certainly thought herself to be the better-looking of the two.

Mrs. Houghton's beauty, such as it was, depended mainly on style; on a certain dash and manner which she had acquired, and which to another woman were not attractive. Mary knew that she herself was beautiful. She could not but know it. She had been brought up by all belonging to her with that belief; and so believing, had taught herself to acknowledge that no credit was due to herself on that score. Her beauty now belonged entirely to her husband. There was nothing more to be done with it, except to maintain her husband's love, and that, for the present, she did not in the least doubt. She had heard of married men falling in love with other people's wives, but she did not in the least bring home the fact to her own case.

In the course of that afternoon all the ladies of the family sat for a time with their guest. First came Lady Sarah and Lady Susanna. Mrs. Houghton, who saw very well how the land lay, rather snubbed Lady Sarah. She had nothing to fear from the dragon of the family. Lady Sarah, in spite of their cousinship, had called her Mrs. Houghton, and Mrs. Houghton in return called the other Lady Sarah. There was to be no intimacy, and she was only received there because of her dislocated shoulder. Let it be so. Lord George and his wife were coming up to

town, and the intimacy should be there. She certainly would not wish to repeat her visit to Manor Cross.

"Some ladies do like hunting, and some don't," she said, in answer to a severe remark from Lady Sarah. "I am one of those who do, and I don't think an accident like that has anything to do with it."

"I can't say I think it an amusement fit for ladies," said Lady Sarah.

"I suppose ladies may do what clergymen do. The dean jumped over the brook just before me." There was not much of an argument in this, but Mrs. Houghton knew that it would vex Lady Sarah, because of the alliance between the dean and the Manor Cross family.

"She's a detestable young woman," Lady Sarah said to her mother, "and I can only hope that Mary won't see much of her up in town."

"I don't see how she can, after what there has been between her and George," said the innocent old lady. In spite, however, of this strongly expressed opinion, the old lady made her visit, taking Lady Amelia with her. "I hope, my dear, you find yourself getting better."

"So much better, Lady Brotherton! But I am sorry to have given you all this trouble; but it has been very pleasant to me to be here, and to see Lord George and Mary together. I declare I think hers is the sweetest face I ever looked upon. And she is so much improved. That's what perfect happiness does. I do so like her."

"We love her very dearly," said the marchioness.

"I am sure you do. And he is so proud of her!" Lady Sarah had said that the woman was detestable, and therefore the marchioness felt that she ought to detest her. But, had it not been for Lady Sarah, she would have been rather pleased with her guest than otherwise. She did not remain very long, but promised that she would return on the next day.

On the following morning Mr. Houghton came again, staying only a few minutes; and while he was in his wife's sitting-room, both Lord George and Mary found them. As they were all leaving her together, she contrived to say a word to her old love. "Don't desert me all the morning. Come and talk to me a bit. I am well now, though they won't let me move about." In obedience to this sum-

mons, he returned to her when his wife was called upon to attend to the ordinary cloak and petticoat conclave of the other ladies. In regard to these charitable meetings she had partly carried her own way. She had so far thrown off the authority as to make it understood that she was not to be bound by the rules which her sisters-in-law had laid down for their own guidance. But her rebellion had not been complete, and she still gave them a certain number of weekly stitches. Lord George had said nothing of this purpose; but for a full hour before luncheon he was alone with Mrs. Houghton. If a gentleman may call on a lady in her house, surely he may, without scandal, pay her a visit in his own. That a married man should chat for an hour with another man's wife in a country house is not much. Where is the man and where the woman who has not done that, quite as a matter of course? And yet when Lord George knocked at the door, there was a feeling on him that he was doing something in which he would not wish to be detected. "This is so good of you," she said. "Do sit down; and don't run away. Your mother and sisters have been here—so nice of them, you know; but everybody treats me as though I oughtn't to open my mouth for above five minutes at a time. I feel as though I should like to jump the brook again immediately."

"Pray don't do that."

"Well, no; not quite yet. You don't like hunting, I'm afraid?"

"The truth is," said Lord George, "that I've never been able to afford to keep horses."

"Ah, that's a reason. Mr. Houghton, of course, is a rich man; but I don't know anything so little satisfactory in itself as being rich."

"It is comfortable."

"Oh yes, it is comfortable; but so unsatisfactory! Of course Mr. Houghton can keep any number of horses; but what's the use, when he never rides to hounds? Better not have them at all, I think. I am very fond of hunting myself."

"I daresay I should have liked it had it come in my way early in life."

"You speak of yourself as if you were a hundred years old. I know your age exactly. You are just seventeen years younger than Mr. Houghton!" To this Lord George had no reply to make. Of course he had felt that when Miss De

Baron had married Mr. Houghton she had married quite an old man. "I wonder whether you were much surprised when you heard that I was engaged to Mr. Houghton?"

"I was, rather."

"Because he is so old?"

"Not that altogether."

"I was surprised myself, and I knew that you would be. But what was I to do?"

"I think you have been very wise," said Lord George.

"Yes, but you think I have been heartless. I can see it in your eyes and hear it in your voice. Perhaps I was heartless;—but then I was bound to be wise. A man may have a profession before him. He may do anything. But what has a girl to think of? You say that money is comfortable."

"Certainly it is."

"How is she to get it, if she has not got it of her own, like dear Mary?"

"You do not think that I have blamed you."

"But even though you have not, yet I must excuse myself to you," she said with energy, bending forward from her sofa towards him. "Do you think that I do not know the difference?"

"What difference?"

"Ah, you shouldn't ask. I may hint at it, but you shouldn't ask. But it wouldn't have done, would it?" Lord George hardly understood what it was that wouldn't have done; but he knew that a reference was being made to his former love by the girl he had loved; and, upon the whole, he rather liked it. The flattery of such intrigues is generally pleasant to men, even when they cannot bring their minds about quick enough to understand all the little ins and outs of the woman's manoeuvres. "It is my very nature to be extravagant. Papa has brought me up like that. And yet I had nothing that I could call my own. I had no right to marry anyone but a rich man. You said just now you couldn't afford to hunt."

"I never could."

"And I couldn't afford to have a heart. You said just now, too, that money is very comfortable. There was a time when I should have found it very, very comfortable to have had a fortune of my own."

"You have plenty."

She wasn't angry with him, because she had already found out that it is the nature

of men to be slow. And she wasn't angry with him, again, because, though he was slow, yet also was he evidently gratified. "Yes," she said, "I have plenty now. I have secured so much. I couldn't have done without a large income; but a large income doesn't make me happy. It's like eating and drinking. One has to eat and drink, but yet one doesn't care very much about it. Perhaps you don't regret hunting very much?"

"Yes, I do, because it enables a man to know his neighbours."

"I know that I regret the thing I couldn't afford."

Then a glimmer of what she meant did come across him, and he blushed. "Things will not always turn out as they are wanted," he said. Then his conscience upbraided him, and he corrected himself. "But, Heaven knows that I have no reason to complain. I have been fortunate."

"Yes, indeed."

"I sometimes think it is better to remember the good things we have than to regret those that are gone."

"That is excellent philosophy, Lord George. And therefore I go out hunting, and break my bones, and fall into rivers, and ride about with such men as Mr. Price. One has to make the best of it, hasn't one? But you, I see, have no regrets."

He paused for a moment, and then found himself driven to make some attempt at gallantry. "I didn't quite say that," he replied.

"You are able to re-establish yourself according to your own tastes. A man can always do so. I was obliged to take whatever came. I think that Mary is so nice."

"I think so too, I can assure you."

"You have been very fortunate to find such a girl; so innocent, so pure, so pretty, and with a fortune too. I wonder how much difference it would have made in your happiness if you had seen her before we had ever been acquainted. I suppose we should never have known each other then."

"Who can say?"

"No; no one can say. For myself, I own that I like it better as it is. I have something to remember that I can be proud of."

"And I something to be ashamed of."

"To be ashamed of!" she said, almost rising in anger.

"That you should have refused me!"

She had got it at last. She had made her fish rise to the fly. "Oh no," she said, "there can be nothing of that. If I did not tell you plainly then, I tell you plainly now. I should have done very wrong to marry a poor man."

"I ought not to have asked you."

"I don't know how that may be," she said, in a very low voice, looking down to the ground. "Some say that if a man loves he should declare his love, let the circumstances be what they may. I rather think that I agree with them. You at any rate knew that I felt greatly honoured, though the honour was out of my reach." Then there was a pause, during which he could find nothing to say. He was trapped by her flattery, but he did not wish to betray his wife by making love to the woman. He liked her words and her manner, but he was aware that she was a thing sacred as being another man's wife. "But it is all better as it is," she said with a laugh, "and Mary Lovelace is the happiest girl of her year. I am so glad you are coming to London, and I do so hope you'll come and see me."

"Certainly I will."

"I mean to be such friends with Mary. There is no woman I like so much. And then circumstances have thrown us together, haven't they? and if she and I are friends, real friends, I shall feel that our friendship may be continued,—yours and mine. I don't mean that all this accident shall go for nothing. I wasn't quite clever enough to contrive it; but I am very glad of it, because it has brought us once more together, so that we may understand each other. Good-bye, Lord George. Don't let me keep you longer now. I wouldn't have Mary jealous, you know."

"I don't think there is the least fear of that," he said in real displeasure.

"Don't take me up seriously for my little joke," she said, as she put out her hand. He took it, and once more smiled, and then left her.

When she was alone there came a feeling on her that she had gone through some hard work with only moderate success; and also a feeling that the game was hardly worth the candle. She was not in the least in love with the man, or capable of being in love with any man. In a certain degree she was jealous, and felt that she owed Mary Lovelace a turn for having so speedily won her own

rejected lover. But her jealousy was not strong enough for absolute malice. She had formed no plot against the happiness of the husband and wife when she came into the house; but the plot made itself, and she liked the excitement. He was heavy, certainly heavy, but he was very handsome, and a lord; and then, too, it was much in her favour that he certainly had once loved her dearly.

Lord George, as he went down to lunch, felt himself to be almost guilty, and hardly did more than creep into the room where his wife and sisters were seated.

"Have you been with Mrs. Houghton?" asked Lady Sarah, in a firm voice.

"Yes, I have been sitting with her for the last half hour," he replied; but he couldn't answer the question without hesitation in his manner. Mary, however, thought nothing about it.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.

By a series of coincidences, of such strikingly regular recurrence that they might almost be supposed to hint at the development of a natural law, our great schools have acquired in the course of the last decade quite an exceptional degree of periodic prominence. It would seem, indeed, as if the institutions which compose our higher scholastic system had been describing a species of revolution, at certain points in which they were compelled to show themselves full in the fierce light of that publicity, which brings out in such fatal relief everything of the nature of abuse or defect.

The movement was commenced by Rugby. For the space of two years and upwards the troubles which agitated the school of Arnold were one of the burning questions of the day, and the interests of Rugby as a school suffered in proportion as the quarrels of its masters became famous. But Rugby was not permitted to monopolise public attention. At intervals, while the great Rugby battles were still raging, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, and, indeed, almost every other school of any pretension, were the scenes of incidents that called for comment and protest. Some of these related to the inner life and discipline of the schools; others followed on the relations which were found to exist between governing bodies, head-masters, and under-masters. Eton was the theatre of disturbances of both kinds. House-

masters increased their fees, parents wrote to the newspapers; partial and impartial journalists contributed leading articles on the subject. Then came the question whether the head-master of Eton, the successor of John Keate—shade of Keate! how the idea of such a question being raised would have raised the wrath of the academic autocrat—had or had not the power of dismissing his subordinates at will. The occasion was seized upon by a host of writers, and many homilies, more or less—for the most part less—relevant to the immediate issue, were preached in the newspapers on Eton generally; the extravagance, the indolence, the luxury, the ignorance of the place.

Meanwhile other seats of learning were not unsuccessfully asserting their several claims to notoriety. Winchester had both troubles and scandals, and took the public into its confidence on the subject of each. There was the great "tunding" case, and the interest of this had hardly died away when one or two sentences of alleged arbitrary expulsion once again conferred notoriety upon the school of Wykeham. The atmosphere of Harrow had not been undisturbed, but the authorities of Harrow displayed a good deal of cleverness in keeping their troubles and difficulties to themselves.

Uppingham School was destined to witness the breaking of the storm in a very sinister and disastrous way. Fever appeared. There was the usual discussion in the public journals, there was a sanitary enquiry, and a temporary migration of the school bodily to the coast of North Wales was the result.

The newer educational foundations were reminded that they were not exempt from the operation of the law of academic disturbances, but the instances already cited are enough to show that the ancient college of St. Peter's, Westminster, cannot justly complain if it finds itself involved in the din of controversy; and that if the opportunity is taken by critics of overhauling it generally, that famous and venerable seminary is but sharing the common lot of schools. The history and successive stages of the discussion are exceedingly simple. The statement went abroad, couched as it was in the most authoritative language, that Westminster School was about to be removed from Westminster. It was immediately contradicted; and the contradiction was followed by the array of all

the arguments for and against removal, in the columns of two or three of the chief organs of public opinion. The arguments for removal consisted of an enumeration of defects, real or imaginary, in the school as it now is. Laxity of discipline, neglect on the part of the masters, failure on the part of the scholars to distinguish themselves at the university or elsewhere, the unhealthiness of the spot; these were each of them in turn dwelt upon as fatal blemishes on the Westminster scutcheon, which it was necessary to remove at once, and which could only be removed by the translation of the school from its historic home to some new rural abode. It is not necessary or desirable here to follow the dispute into its details. Probably the decision which the public has arrived at is that the case against Westminster is not proven. It is likely enough that if the pious founder were now to establish and endow a school of the character of Westminster, he would not stipulate for a spot under the shadow of the Houses of Parliament. But the genius of Westminster may be regarded as having been consulted, and as having given utterance to a sentiment like that which fell from the graven images of the tutelary deities of ancient Rome, when it was contemplated to shift the site of the Italian capital: "It is better to remain here." It has been shown that the school in its present abode is not unhealthy, that proper discipline within its precincts can be and is preserved, that it satisfies the requirements of the capital in a manner which could not be attained were its site to be changed. The academic distinctions achieved in the last few years by old Westminsters are not, indeed, as numerous as might be wished. They are, however, on the increase; and there is no reason to suppose that the rate of increase would be magically accelerated if the revolution on which the partisans of change are bent were an accomplished fact. To most persons it would seem that the removal of Westminster to a London suburb, or to a provincial neighbourhood more remote, would be not only an act of iconoclasm, but of gross injustice to the inhabitants of the metropolis. Half-boarders and home-boarders exist at Westminster to a degree not known at other great public schools. A half-boarder who dines at the school four days a week, pays rather less than fifty pounds a year; a home-boarder about half that sum; and these boys, an extremely rare thing in the case of public school day-

boys, may be said to enjoy the entire advantages of the school.

As Westminster is an institution which has distinct traditions of its own, so has it preserved throughout its varying fortunes a certain special tone which is creditable to the place, its associations, and its scholars. The social influences of a great school are as valuable in their way as the educational; they would be jeopardised and probably destroyed if the process of transplantation were carried out. Westminster School is the proper appendage of the famous abbey. It has contributed to swell the list of English statesmen, divines, scholars, and men of letters in a very appreciable degree, because it stands where it does, because its locality is an inspiring one, because Westminster boys are in the centre of ennobling memories, because they are free of the gallery in the House of Commons, because they form an integral part of the foundation in whose visible fabric the great temple of "reconciliation and silence," as Macaulay has termed it, otherwise our national Walhalla, is the chief feature. Like Eton, Westminster is a royal school; and what Windsor Castle is to Eton, that the "ancient palace and court of Westminster" are to the school of Westminster. Imagine Eton divorced from the playing-fields, from the Brocas, from the ancestral dwelling-place of English monarchy; imagine Harrow without its hill, and one has a fair idea of what Westminster School would be without Westminster. It is conceivable that there might be objections to its continuance in its present habitation, so overwhelming that removal would be absolutely necessary. The waters of the Thames might exhale, as they once did, a subtle and pestiferous miasma. It might be impossible to effect the necessary hygienic arrangements subject to the conditions of space imposed by a situation in a city. The number of boys might be in excess of the accommodation afforded, and it might be out of the question to increase that accommodation without an exodus. Some of these arguments did apply to the case of the Charterhouse; they do apply strongly—more strongly than to Charterhouse—in the case of Christ's Hospital. When the latter is removed to the country, it will not be a question of any violent or unnatural solution in the continuity of the life or the traditions of the school; it would simply be an emancipation of seven hundred boys from the house of bondage—the addition to the educational

machinery of the school of that machinery of recreation and sport, playground, and cricket-fields, without which the theory and practice of English school education are incomplete. None of these reasons can be advanced in connection with Westminster. The situation of the school may not, as has been allowed, be one of ideal perfection, but it is an essential part of its life; and to divest it of the character which it derives from that situation, would be to break needlessly with the past history of the place, to inflict a wrong on the parents of boys whose home is London, and to rob the capital of the empire of an institution which is the only one of the kind that it possesses.

"I heard and saw," writes John Evelyn in his *Diary*, under date May 13, 1661, "such exercises at the election of scholars at Westminster School, to be sent to the university, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic, in themes and extemporary verses, as wonderfully astonished me in such youths, with such readiness, and with some of them not above twelve or thirteen years of age. Pity it is that what they attain here so rapidly, they either do not retain or do not improve more considerably when they come to be men, though many of them do; and no less is to be blamed their odd pronouncing of Latin, so that out of England none were able to understand or endure it." The pronunciation of the Latin language, it may be observed, remains at Westminster what it was in the days of Mr. Pepys, though some schools have adopted a change in the direction, which the diarist would have approved. As to his criticisms on the absence of any progress in classical literature on the part of old Westminsters when manhood has been reached, it is a charge which seems scarcely to be borne out by facts. In pure scholarship and letters, the achievements and fame of old Westminsters may challenge comparison with those of the alumni of any other school. Nine archbishops head the roll of Westminster distinctions—the two latest being Vernon Harcourt, Archbishop of York, and the late primate, Dr. Langley. In addition, sixty old Westminsters have in the fulness of time attained to the honour of the episcopal bench; brief mention of some of whom, in order that they may indicate the character of the rest, may be made. The first on the list is Cabot, Bishop of Norwich, the "jolly Bishop" of Norwich, described by Thomas Fuller as

"of a courteous courage, and no destructive nature to any who offended him, counting himself plentifully repaired with a jest." One who was joint author with the royal penman, to whom the work is generally and extensively attributed, of the Eikon Basilike—Duppa, of Winchester, was an old Westminster. So too was Morley, also of Winchester, chaplain of Charles the First, and a powerful instrument in the restoration of Charles the Second. Trelawney, one of the seven prelates imprisoned; Atterbury, the greatest ecclesiastical pamphleteer of his age, the friend of Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, and Gay, the most brilliant scholar of his university; Isaac Barrow, perhaps the best preacher, and the most massive theologian whom the Church of England has produced; Humphrey Prideaux, of Norwich; Goodenough, of Bristol, whose sermons as chaplain to the House of Peers elicited the epigram :

'Twas well enough that Goodenough before the Lords
 should preach,
 For sure enough they're bad enough for Goodenough
 to teach.

—Westminster has the honour of having trained all these. Among authors—Ben Jonson; Hakluyt; Will Cartwright, of whom Dr. Fell, the head-master of Westminster, and an old Westminster, declared that he was "the utmost man can come to;" Cowley; George Herbert; Nat Lee; Dryden; John Locke, most distinguished of the pupils of the distinguished Busby; Vincent Bourne; Bonnel Thornton, translator of Plautus; Gibbon; Cowper; Horne Tooke; Robert Southey; were all of them old Westminsters. In the department of law and statesmanship, the school has been not less famous and fortunate. In proof of this, may be cited the names of William Murray; Earl Mansfield; Sir Francis Buller; Sir David Dundas; the younger Vane, of whom Milton has written :

Young in years, but in sage counsel old,
 Than whom no better senator e'er held
 The Roman helm :—

Pulteney, Earl of Bath; Warren Hastings; the late Marquis of Lansdowne; the late Sir James Graham; and the present Earl Russell. Of the seven officers not being of royal blood, who rose to the rank of field-marshal between 1810 and 1856, five were brought up at Westminster—Henry Paget, Marquis of Anglesey; Thomas Grosvenor; John Byng, Lord

Strafford; Stapleton Cotton, Lord Combermere; Fitzroy Somerset, Lord Raglan.

Of the traditions and practices which are specially identified with Westminster, the Latin drama, performed at the close of the winter term, is the chief. There are two others which may just be named—the tossing of the pancake by the cook, on Shrove Tuesday, over the boundary line which divides the upper from the lower school; and the "challenges," a survival, of course, of the old scholastic disputations of mediæval times. The average annual number of vacancies for places in college is ten. The two lowest boys come up before the head-master, having prepared a certain portion of Greek epigram and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The lower of the two boys is the challenger, and calls on the boy challenged to translate the passage; and, if he can detect and correct any fault in the translation, he takes the upper boy's place. The "helps" stand by during the contest, and act as counsel to their "men," in case of any doubt arising as to the correctness of a question or answer; and the head-master sits as moderator, and decides the point in dispute. The boy who at the end of the challenge is found to have finally retained his place, can subsequently challenge the boy next above him in the list of candidates for admission, and may thus fight his way up through the roll of competitors. The struggle frequently extends over six to eight weeks, and the ten who are highest at its close obtain admission to the foundation in the order in which they stand.

But the institution best known to the outside world in connection with Westminster is the Terentian or Plautine drama, played towards the close of every December, by the Queen's scholars, in the College dormitory. A passage through a series of compartments on either side, separated from each other by thin partition boards, the beds being concealed by curtains hanging in front of every little closet, conducts the visitor to the chamber that does duty as a playhouse. On the walls are painted the names of past Westminster boys for many a generation back, and among these, till within some thirty years since, the name of John Dryden was clearly visible. The Westminster Play itself is as much a relic of ancient days as the Shrove-Tuesday pancake, and must obviously be referred to the dramatic celebrations which used to mark certain

festivals of the church, or possibly to the custom which once existed in schools and colleges of greeting the king or queen with music and interludes. It is matter of history that Queen Elizabeth was greatly gratified with the performance of the *Adelphi* of Terence, which she witnessed at Westminster, and expressed her desire that the usage might be maintained, "for the better accustoming of the boys to correct action and elocution." The letters of the most eminent of old Westminsters teem with allusions to the Westminster Play. Atterbury, when Dean of Christchurch, wrote to Trelawney, Bishop of Winchester, with many expressions of the satisfaction he had experienced at the performance of his lordship's son of the part of Antipho in the *Phormio*. "Mr. Trelawney played Antipho extremely well, and some parts he, performed admirably. Your lordship may depend upon it that, in what place soever he stands, he shall go first of the election to Oxford, and shall have all the assistance and advantage that it is possible for a dean of Christchurch to give him." In the winter of 1749 three boys, who all subsequently became famous, appeared in the *Phormio*: Colman, who played the part of Geta; Lloyd, that of Demipho; and Hobart, afterwards conductor of the Italian Opera, who played Antipho. Garrick frequently witnessed the entertainment, and took such interest in the matter that he suggested the designs of the scenery which was employed, until Professor C. R. Cockerell replaced them by canvases more elegantly and appropriately illustrated.

Just thirty years ago there was a talk of abolishing the play. A memorial was addressed to the dean and chapter of Westminster, signed by nearly six hundred old Westminsters, who recorded their "firm and deliberate belief, founded on experience and reflection, that the abolition of the Westminster Play cannot fail to prove prejudicial to the interests and prosperity of the school." The same protest which the contemplated termination of the Westminster Play created may well be called forth now, by the attempt that is undoubtedly being made to bring about the compulsory removal of Westminster School. Happily there is reason to believe that it is an attempt, which is only another instance of that spirit of agitation for agitation's sake which has latterly become an academic mania, and to which, as we have seen, all schools are in turn subject.

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

OUR ANGLING CLUB.

It would hardly be supposed that anglers, the most clubable of men, could exist without clubs and societies of their own. Yet for many years they did so, and relied for angling converse on chance encounters by lake and stream; on the morning chat on the way to sport, so neatly utilised by writers on angling from Walton to Davy; and on the gossip over the pipe which succeeded the plain and wholesome meal at the country inn. Between railways and the general determination of mankind towards club life, a better state of things has been brought about. It was pleasant enough under the old style to dine on that excellent arrangement of a fowl known as a spread-eagle, with curly bits of bacon nestling under its outstretched wing, and succulent mushrooms lurking in the dish, washed down with nut-brown ale, and supplemented by a steaming tumbler of toddy. It was pleasant too to fight our battles o'er again, to tell how we landed that heavy barbel, and by what inconceivable chance we lost the big chub. Through the lemon-laden mist and the denser wreaths of nicotian cloud, fishes loomed vast and huge, their weight increased too with each tumbler, and the circumstances attending their capture put on a more picturesque guise with each successive charge of cavendish; till at last measures of size became, as it were, elastic and ill-defined, and we marched off to the little chamber with lavender-scented sheets and vine-covered casements then and there, to sleep the dreamless slumber of the just man who has passed a day in the sweet, fresh air of the country. This was passing well before the increasing pace of life extended to anglers, or, to put the case more accurately, the pace of railroads enabled thousands whose occupations forbid more than one day's holiday at a time, to indulge their natural taste for sport. With the great increase in the number of fishermen, and their desire to get home to bed at night, still existed the love of comparing notes after the day's sport; a desire inextinguishable in the true sportsman. It was found to be but dull work, starting early in the morning by candlelight to catch a train, and then returning home late at night to find wife asleep, fire gone out, and not a soul to whom to show the basket of handsome jack or plump roach. The angler felt that this would not satisfy his sportsmanlike aspirations, would never

gratify the yearnings of his soul. All hunting animals are vain of the proceeds of their skill. Perhaps the most domesticated animal next to man—to wit, the cat—is the most striking instance of this peculiarity. Ordinary puss is not content unless she shows the mouse or rat she has killed to her master; and country folk know the poaching cat, who slinks out at nightfall and rarely returns without a pheasant or partridge to lay at his feet. The writer has known two cats of this kind very well, and as the owner of a poaching animal is not apt to boast of its powers, has no doubt that the creature is by no means rare. Mighty stalkers of red-deer, and slayers of grouse, pheasant, and partridge, are to the full as vain as puss. They court the applause of the sporting world by forwarding long accounts of their astonishing bags to the daily newspapers, which somehow find room for them. So does the lordly salmon-fisher condescend to inform the public, through the medium previously alluded to, that he has landed on such a day five salmon and two grilse, and on another seven salmon, whereof one weighed forty-two pounds. If this passion then be so deeply rooted in the bosom of the hunter of wild creatures, what marvel is it that the Thames fisherman, whose patience when in pursuit of a trout throws that of Chingachgook into the shade, should wish his skill to be recognised; if not of all men, as is that of the mighty Nimrods aforesaid, yet by those of his own craft, in the same punt with him as it were? It is this entirely natural and laudable feeling of vanity extending from cat to king, from roach-fisher to deer-stalker, that is at the bottom of angling clubdom, albeit this institution has developed another spirit—that of emulation. In olden times—be it said without disparagement of the honour and veracity of our forefathers—the weight and quality of captured fish was talked about but loosely; and anglers, when recounting the deeds of their brethren, would, not unfrequently, by the partial closing of one eye, indicate that the statements of their friends should be taken with—well, a little seasoning. This was when angling was a thing of byways; but the Thames angler has changed all this, and he and his deeds revel in the full glare of publicity. This is encouraged by the extension to angling of the system of competitive examination, and the institution of prizes for the biggest fish of various kinds, and the

greatest takes in public and private waters. Out of the desire to exhibit has grown the desire to compete and to excel. It is not sufficient for Piscator to have his wholesome walk to the brookside, and his pleasant shade by the sweet silver streams; to enjoy the “good air and sweet smells of fine fresh meadow flowers,” the “melodious harmony” of birds, the prospect of the “swans, herons, ducks, waterhens, coots, and many other fowl with their brood,” and other delights enumerated by Burton in his “adaptation” of the views of Dame Juliana Berners. Piscator Londinensis, in addition to all these delights and the actual sport of catching fish, is nothing if not an exhibitor, a competitor, a prizeman. It is a sublime thing to land an eighteen-pound pike, for instance; and a solemn thrill of joy passes through the person at the other end of the rod, as the great monster of the weed-grown backwaters first shows his dappled side. The joy of the man who takes a big pike is not simply of the present, but is gilded by anticipations of the future. As the big fish makes one more savagely sullen effort to escape the toils, and appears to the mind’s-eye of his captor tons heavier than he really is, in that mind’s-eye are scenes of triumph to come. The ambitious Stubbs sees that this one great stroke will wipe out all the deeds of his rival Dubbs. The latter has taken all the prizes for jack-fishing hitherto, for the biggest fish and the greatest take; but this eighteen, computed at twenty-five, pounder will wipe the eye of Dubbs, and put an end to his story of his big jack, with all its wealth of detail, and of repetition. “What,” asks Stubbs, as *Esox Lucius* makes another sullen, dogged attempt at resistance, “what be his sixteen and seventeen pounders compared with my prize fish? Where is his vaunted perch now, where his heavy roach? This, I flatter myself, will settle Dubbs once and for all.” It is not often that Stubbs proves an Alnaschar, for a heavy jack once well hooked is, in skilful hands, a tolerably certain capture.

Leaving Stubbs to kill his fish, to receive that sweet incense of adulation which Thames puntmen know how to administer, and to carry his fish triumphantly to the club, let us ask for the moment at which of the numerous metropolitan angling clubs the monster jack will be shown and admired and his captor envied. At the present moment there are about eighty angling clubs or societies in and

around London, and fifty-three of these are associated together under the name of the United London Anglers, and pay social visits to the Head Centre. The fifty-three united clubs number collectively about seventeen hundred members, and the other clubs about five hundred. All trades and professions have representatives among the metropolitan angling societies. Tinkers, tailors, soldiers, sailors, doctors and lawyers, bakers and parsons, painters and plasterers, are all on the rolls of these institutions. Mr. J. J. Manley, in his pleasant book on Fish and Fishing, considers that to the anglers regularly enrolled must be added at least one thousand regular practitioners who belong to no clubs, and five hundred more who reside in the vicinity of the Thames, the Lea, and other waters within about twenty miles of London; giving a total of about four thousand steady anglers in and around the metropolis.

Angling clubs are a great feature in modern fishing, as they are not confined to the London district, but are found at Nottingham, Leeds, and many other towns of the North and Midlands. In these essentially sporting localities intense interest is excited by a fishing sweepstake, or a match for the championship of the river and a substantial stake in hard cash. London, however, claims the merit of creating that section of clubland which is devoted to angling. The metropolitan clubs have increased with extraordinary rapidity. They hold their meetings, weekly or bi-weekly, at a congenial hostelry, the landlord of which is sometimes one of the fraternity. Considerable fancy has been exercised in the choice of titles for these societies, in which the craft is combined with the locality, and also with alliterative suggestions of a brotherly and convivial character. In Finsbury meets a society which has evidently received its quaint title from some satirist of the fraternal relation. It is called the Amicable Brothers. The fraternity of others is clearly suggested by alliteration, as the Bloomsbury Brothers, the Walworth Waltonians, and the Knights of Knightsbridge. Others suggest political sympathies, as the Prince of Wales, the Reform, the St. Pancras Working Man's Society; and many bear purely local appellations. Oddest, perhaps, of all are those which have perpetuated the memory of some forgotten sign, as the Golden Barbels, the Hearts of Oak, and the Silver Trouts; and they should be

right good fellows who compose the Brothers-Well-Met, the Odds and Evens, the Convivial, and the Nil Desperandum angling clubs. The club-rooms in which these merry brethren of the angle congregate are decorated with preserved fish, duly embalmed and mummified in glass cases. At their meetings they show and weigh in their fish, and the take of each exhibiting member is duly recorded on the books of the society, with a view to the prizes given by the club and by private individuals. It would be difficult to give a list of the articles deemed fitting rewards for skill in angling. Almost anything from a punt to a pencil-case is considered appropriate, but the most popular form of an angling prize is either a watch, a silver teapot—very insidious this, as tending to appease the wrath of Piscator's wife when he is away fishing—a purse, a cigar-case, or sets of fishing-tackle. Fishing-boots and waterproof coats are also frequently given as prizes, as are coals at Christmas-tide. Even a lively young porker, and that most intelligent and affectionate of animals, a young donkey, have appeared in the lists of prizes.

Apart from regular club and private matches are the angling battles which, like brass-band contests, rabbit-coursing, and the mysterious game of knurr and spell, appear to owe their existence to the licensed victualling interest. The enterprising landlord of The Tom Tiddler's Arms, be that hostelry situate on Thames or Trent, Colne or Lea, gets up the whole affair and provides the prizes, contriving to lose nothing by his well-calculated liberality. Not long ago, in the North Midlands, the host of a fishing-inn offered six prizes, ranging from twenty-four to four pounds sterling, to be fished for, and his friends provided one hundred and seventy additional baits for the angler. The competitors, who had to pay three shillings and sixpence entrance each, numbered no fewer than five hundred, and they were stationed at twelve yards apart; the array of fishermen thus occupying a distance along the waterside of three miles and a half. The day being a suitable one for fishing, the aggregate of fish taken was very large, the winner of the first prize scoring nineteen pounds one ounce and a half. The arrangement was perfect, and everything passed off well, without any unseemly wrangling. Since the great event just recorded, an interesting contest took place on the Lea. Two hundred and

seventy-six anglers entered for a great roach match, and the day being unfavourable, the winner got the first prize of forty pounds with thirteen ounces and a half of fish—thus worth four-fifths of their weight in gold.

How far angling contests, private matches, and the more innocent form of club cumulative competition tend to render a man contemplative and philosophical, I will not pretend to determine. To my unbiassed mind it would appear that angling for a hundred pounds a side is not calculated to make "our souls holy and wise, by heavenly thought and meditation;" and that "the music of the falling weir" (by-the-way, the weir does not fall, although the water does) would to my mercenary ear have a chink as of rouleaux, if I had a cool hundred on. It would be a remarkably cool hundred too if it were a match at pike or roach, and I doubt much whether my "joyful eye" and mind would be "wrapt above the starry sky." What too would become of my "gentleness of spirit and pure serenity of mind," while I sat with stiffening fingers and nose rapidly assuming a cerulean hue, watching my own motionless float, while mine adversary was filling his basket? I fear me that my patience would not be "more than heart can wish," and that the sensations experienced in less tranquil scenes would be revived in my bosom.

Passing by these thoughts on the doubtful aspect of angling considered as a fine art, which have sufficed to doze away an hour in the railway carriage, let us hasten to our fishing society, the oldest of the kindred associations now flourishing in the metropolis. It is thirty-nine years since our fishing society was founded, and under one and another roof it has flourished ever since. To find it we will turn out of the Strand, near the Adelphi Theatre. The hostelry hard by the famous oyster-shop where the wits and jokers, wittings and case-hardened listeners, of the last generation spent their evenings or rather nights, is the lair of the angler. Hither we come to show our fish, to weigh in, to discuss the state of the wind, the preternatural brightness of the water, and the marvellous tenacity of the weeds, which refuse to clear off and expose the mighty pike to our snares. Round the walls of our haunt are the trophies of successful angling, nobly presented to the society by individual anglers, that their glory might be made manifest. In the case at the end

of the room is a noteworthy instance of an improved method of preserving the memory of a fish deemed worthy of that honour. It is a pike, taken by Keene, from Rapley Lake, cast by Mr. Frank Buckland, coloured and presented by Mr. H. L. Rolfe. It is a monster fish of thirty-five pounds, and reproduced in a manner which reduces the mummy fish round to complete insignificance. Among these, however, there are many curious specimens. There is a trout, from Great Lake, of ten pounds eight ounces; three Wandle trout of over five pounds each, an eight-and-a-quarter-pound Thames trout, and a Gillaroo trout from Ireland. The array of pike is very fine, including one twenty-five-pounder, and others of twenty, twenty-one, and fifteen pounds. There is a nine-pound pike-perch from the Elbe, and a genuine Colne perch weighing three; crucian carp, and Thames carp, and a mighty barbel from the same river—a nine-pounder. Great roach and dace too are there, handsome but tasteless chub, bellows-like bream, and slimy tench. Not the least agreeable possession of the club is a pike's head fashioned into a loving-cup, a brave ornament to the festive board.

Shortly after half-past eight we begin to assemble: those who have been out fishing to show what they have done, and to talk about it; and those who have stayed at home, to listen, to put searching questions, to admire and to criticise the various takes of fish, set out on trays, and placed on tables arranged round the room. The angling specialists are soon discovered. The jack-fishers collect around the many trays of jack; the fanatical roach-fisher cannot be roused from apathy until a score of roach averaging about a pound apiece appear, and almost take his breath away. He looks carefully at them, and then becomes more resigned, for he finds that not one of them can touch the two-pounder already recorded in his favour, and that therefore his chance of the one biggest roach prize is not yet imperilled. It must not be understood from my remark that anglers are a greedy or mercenary folk, for they are nothing of the kind, and would gladly spend ten pounds to win a prize worth one. Our club prizes are in money, and are twelve in number, to wit: for the largest Thames trout, to weigh not less than five pounds; for the largest trout from any water (except the Thames), to weigh not less than two-and-a-half pounds; for the largest grayling, pike, perch, roach, chub,

bream, dace, carp, and tench. These may be called our fish prizes, but we have no fewer than forty-seven extra prizes given by various members, under all kinds of conditions. Thus, Mr. Frank Buckland promises a prize of one guinea per pound for the first salmon taken from the Thames within City jurisdiction; Mr. Bernard, a salmon-rod for the first grilse or salmon from the Thames; and Mr. Rolfe offers a painting to the member who shall catch the greatest weight of fish during the year. Other members give prizes for the greatest weight of particular kinds of fish taken during the season and on certain days, and a kindred society, the Walworth Waltonians, previously mentioned, offer a couple of guineas for the largest barbel. Moreover, we have two competitions every year. One of these is for the heaviest weight of barbel taken by one or two members angling from the same punt, with one rod and line each, on the same day, and at any fishing-station on the Thames; the date to be fixed by the committee. On this particular day of October—to wit, the 15th—there has been a jack competition for a prize instituted in honour of a defunct member, a good angler, if ever there was one. We are, therefore, all anxious to see what has been done, and there is plenty of time for the contemplative brethren to enjoy themselves, for the lists are not closed to competitors till it strikes midnight at St. Clement Danes, and many come from afar. One member, an enthusiast of the first water, has been up betimes, and has played terrible havoc with the jack at Mapledurham, fishing with the snap. He sits now in his glory, with his captives laid out before him in their hideousness of outline and golden-bronze beauty of colour. He thinks he has a good chance, for his eight jack weigh well enough to promise him an easy win; but his mind is not at rest, for three more slayers of jack are known to be yet abroad, and their score is yet to be taken. His fish have been well and duly weighed and entered, and are attracting the admiration of all save one gloomy youth, who, content with the gross weight, objects that there is not one prize fish among them. This young gentleman is a prize fisherman. He loves to go for big things, and sets little store by the time he takes in accomplishing them. "My Thames trout," he tells me, "was not got without trouble. Three weeks I was after him every day. I knew he was there, and I determined to have him. These

great trout, as you know, always feed at a fixed hour, and half an hour before his feeding-time I was at my post day after day, and week after week. At last I got a chance, as I thought, and missed him—missed him after three weeks' pursuit. But I went again the next morning, and I had him sure enough. I like prize fish, and like to think of the time I had with my big chub. You've heard of my big chub?" I should think I had. I could tell the story of that big chub myself; but I may not be uncharitable. I strive to laugh, I recollect all that Johnson and Byron, Peter Pindar, and other superficial people have said against anglers; but my instinct of the nineteenth century—the century of the straight line—refuses to laugh at my prize-fishing friend. The man who can go out day after day for six, or even for three weeks, to catch a fish which, when caught, is not half so good as a salmon, must be a dangerous opponent. I fear not at all your dashing opponent with his "long sword, saddle, bridle, whack-falderol." The quality called élan, dash, and so forth dismays me not a whit in an opponent, but I confess I fight shy of your quiet man, who does not thrust or squeeze, but keeps steadily pushing on and on till he has got whatever he wants, be it a trout or more negotiable treasure. I make up my mind that I will not quarrel with the man who waits three weeks for a Thames trout.

While we have been discussing the merits of paternosters and live bait, gorge-fishing, ledgering, and spinning, tray after tray of fish has appeared at the board, and much excitement has been produced by a handsome take of chub and another equally brilliant catch of roach. We dwell fondly on these fish, "as if we loved them," and point out the beauty of this, the plumpness of that, and the splendour of that particular victim. From time to time we talk of strange fishes—the monsters of brook and lakelet. We get up an animated discussion on the probable existence of the finless fish of one mysterious loch, and the tailless trout of another not very well mapped-out tarn. The latter strange animal is said to resemble an ordinary trout, save that his tail appears to have been cut round and singed by a lamp or candle flame. Another suspicious circumstance concerning him is that he is only to be caught on certain occasions, and when a gillie well acquainted with his habits accompanies the angler. A sceptic

present says that the whole story reminds him curiously of that of Antony and Cleopatra; and he is only brought to reason by the remark that, as there are eyeless fish, a tailless fish is not impossible. A civil engineer attempts to prove that a fish could not swim without a properly organised tail, and the conversation becomes warm as I fling the name of Darwin, like an apple of discord, into it. But our fury is short-lived, the arrival of another tray of jack, and the materials for drowning dull care, disperse the gathering clouds, and harmony is once more the order of the good fellows at our angling club.

"NOBBINS."

"WELL," said Mr. Chummer, knocking out his pipe against the spittoon and taking a final melancholy sip at his tumbler—we are in the smoking-room of The Equinoctial Hotel; a dusky, underground place, frequented by gentlemen of the sock and buskin—"well, you may talk about the claims of art and all that sort of thing, and the drama as a school of culture; but if I'd my time over again, I should drop all that and go in for nobbins. You don't understand; well, I'll explain. A good many years ago," continued Mr. Chummer, "being at the time out of an engagement and at dead low water, Calker, the theatrical agent, sent for me and asked if I would mind going down for a night to take the 'Robber chief' at a popular fête somewhere in the North—Rubblesfield, I think they called the place—a temporary theatre in the grounds; Miss Maccall, of Theatre Royal, Manchester, and other talent to support me. Terms, five guineas and expenses. The five guineas were there chinking in Calker's hands. That settled me; for at that moment I did not know where to look for a shilling, the wife ill in bed, the cupboard bare, and the landlady bullying for her rent. I mention this just to show you what a temptation it was, that handful of ready money. Anyhow, I agreed to go, that day week, a Saturday. The five guineas down; expenses after the performance.

"You may know how quickly a fiver dries up after a good long drought, and when I reached King's Cross Station one misty, raw morning, there was only just enough left to pay my fare third class to Rubblesfield, and a few shillings for casualties. But then there were expenses

to come, so that it would be hard if I did not come back next day with a pound or two in my pocket.

"As we came near Rubblesfield all the dead walls were covered with huge posters—'Royal People's Park,' with a great picture of a red balloon in a blue sky, and underneath in huge letters, 'Mr. Harry Nought's terrific ascent;' a good deal smaller, 'Mr. Charlton Chummer, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, &c. &c., London;' bigger again, 'The Breakdown Troupe of Ethiopian Minstrels, late of St. Jingo's Hall, London,' and numerous other attractions.

"My entrepreneur met me at the station; a big, roughish kind of man, Barker by name, and the landlord of a large public-house connected with the Royal People's Park. He wore a gloomy, ill-used air, as if the world were not going well with him. It was a gloomy kind of a place too, this Rubblesfield; more cinders to be seen than grass, even in the country, and a great pall of smoke over it, stretching away for miles. The park turned out to be a good-sized field, enclosed with tall boards; a sickly shrubbery maze, and a big wooden booth, devoted to drinking. The public-house was at one end; a good-sized place, but with a dirty, neglected look about it.

"Where's the theatre?' I asked, looking about all round, but seeing nothing to answer to it. Mr. Barker led me to a wooden scaffold in the middle of the field. The dressing-room was underneath on the bare soil, and you climbed up to the stage by a ladder, for all the world as if you were going to be hanged. 'Why, this won't do,' I said.

"It'll have to do," said Barker, doggedly.

"Where's the Manchester lady?' I asked? 'What does she say to it?'

"Mr. Barker hummed and ha'd, and admitted, at last, that the lady was not coming.

"There had been a bit of a bungle about the job," he said. He had meant the five guineas to cover the whole of the play. He could afford no more, and had expected a whole company for his money.

"And now," he said, looking me over disparagingly, 'there's nobbut thee.'

"For all I was hurt, I admired the terseness of the man's language.

"Nobbut me," I repeated in melancholy accents. I could not assure Mr. Barker that I was a host in myself. I did not feel like it. 'I can't act single-handed, Mr. Barker,' I said.

"Then would ye like to give me back

the brass and go whome?' cried the landlord eagerly. But that arrangement did not suit me exactly. We stood there looking at each other and at the empty scaffold, Barker scratching his head and I pulling at my moustache. Then Mr. Barker broke the silence.

"Happen you can do something to please the folk. Can you dance, mister?"

"The polka," I said, at that time a popular dance.

"Nay, it must be something stronger than polka," rejoined Barker. "They're partial to clogs in these parts," looking at my feet suggestively. He meant wooden shoes, with soles six inches thick and bound in solid brass. I shook my head.

"Suppose," I hazarded, "that I make a neat apology for not giving the play, and recite Macbeth's soliloquy or something out of Hamlet?"

"What'syon like?" he asked, doubtfully.

"I gave him a specimen of my craft.

"Why, lod," he said, when I had finished, "they'd tear thee to pieces if thou'd naught better nar that to spout for 'em."

"It was now just noon, and there broke out all round a booming, buzzing noise, that made the ground tremble and set every nerve in the body quivering. 'What's this noise?' I asked.

"It's only buzzas," replied the landlord, contemptuous of my ignorance, "for chaps to quit their work. They'll just cut home and clean themselves and then we shall have 'em here. I hope you'll be ready for 'em, mister, for they're a rough lot of chaps to play with I can tell you."

"With that he left me to my own reflections. And these were not of a very cheerful order. I could certainly never give an entertainment all by myself, I had never attempted anything of the kind before. And yet I felt sure that if I failed to hit the popular taste, I should be roughly handled by my audience, while this rough handling would be courtesy itself to what I should get if I declined to appear at all. Then I was slapped sharply on the shoulder, and turning round I confronted an Ethiopian, a real darkie with a banjo.

"Ain't we in a jolly hole!" he said, with a chuckle. "The balloon won't go, the Breakdowns ain't coming; won't there be a jolly row!"

"He went on to explain that the gas company had declined to finish inflating the balloon till they were paid for the gas; that Barker, who had looked to the people's shillings to defray this and other expenses, had suddenly been distrained

upon by a hostile creditor, bailiffs holding the wickets and taking the gate-money—taking but not inclined to part with it. The Ethiopians had got wind of this, and failed to put in an appearance. As for darkie himself, he had come on the off chance of making a trifle. 'But if the man can't pay you?' I suggested. Sambo winked, nodded, laughed; 'Nobbins,' he cried, and disappeared.

"Certainly, it was a gloomy look-out. If I had not taken the man's money, I too should have vanished. It seemed very unlikely that I should ever touch a farthing for expenses, and how to get home, and the sick wife expecting me, and the irascible landlady—oh, I felt bad, I can tell you. The people were flocking in now, and certainly they answered Mr. Barker's description of a rough lot. They might have cleaned themselves 'a bit,' but still bore on their honest faces many traces of the week's labour. They were pitmen, hammermen, puddlers, black in the face, and brawny of arm. As time went on, I grew more and more anxious. Nobody was at hand to take the direction of the entertainments. People took to amusing themselves by throwing the oyster-shells which decorated the maze at each other's heads, and then they began to cluster thick as bees about the enclosure that held the half-inflated balloon. I saw Mr. Harry Nought frantically haranguing the crowd. Very shortly afterwards, the sovereign people were walking about with little bits of oiled silk stuck into their hats like wedding favours. These were pieces of the balloon.

"Then the cry rose for the minstrels, and my friend with the banjo essayed to stand in the breach. Happily he was as nimble as the monkey of his native wilds, and now he owed his life to his agility in swarming over the park palings. The appetite of the people for mischief grew by what it fed upon.

"After that I heard a cry for myself, 'Choomer, Choomer!' a solitary cry, at first, like an old hound when he hits off the scent. Next moment the whole mad pack would have been upon me.

"And then Jupiter Pluvius pulled me out of the fire. A tremendous downpour of rain began, and cleared the field like magic. All had rushed to the big refreshment-booth, now crammed to overflowing with the shouting, bellowing crowd, whose liveliness was only damped, not quenched.

"The landlord came to me with tears in his eyes, and begged me to save the whole place from being wrecked, by doing some-

thing to keep the people amused. They were calling for 'Barker' now, but Barker was not willing to come. The banjo-man, who had more pluck than I, and had returned from his sudden flight over the palings not a bit discouraged, urged me to go on, and promised to support me. At last, in desperation, I threw off my coat, snatched up the landlord's apron and a pint mug, and rushed upon the stage. The people rose at me, thinking it was Barker himself, and meaning to rub him out; and so, when I burst into a patter song, and they saw that it was not Barker, but the London player taking him off, the enthusiasm was immense. You could hardly hear a word of the song for the roars of applause, and when I added some extempore verses about the balloon and the fête, and Barker's red nose, the delight of the people culminated.

"I rushed from the stage at last amid thunders of applause and loud calls for a repeat, and almost fainted away in the darkie's arms. 'You must go on again,' he said. 'I can't do it,' I whispered, my voice gone with fatigue and excitement. 'Golly, man,' he cried, 'you mustn't miss this. Landlord's in the cellar hidden behind the barrels. The bailiffs is up the chimney, trembling for their lives. There's only you and me in the game; you do the patter, old chap, and I'll do the nobbins.' 'What are they?' I asked, thinking he meant the bones, or something of that kind. He laughed, incredulous of my ignorance, and pushed me upon the stage.

"This time, after I had sung two more extempore verses, with great applause, thumping of tables, banging of brass-bound clogs, and a tempest of shouts, I saw Snowball's oily face working its way through the crowd, his long arms pushing about his battered old hat, which fortunately had a good sound top, and the coppers pouring into it in cataracts. 'Nobbins!' he cried, 'Nobbins, my noble swells!' and the crowd caught up the catchword, 'Nobbins! nobbins!' roared out in one tremendous shout; and I fancy that any man who had denied his nobbins that night, would have been roughly handled by his pals. I don't think there was anybody in that vast crowd who did not shell out something; and when, on the inspiration of the moment, I struck up a verse, the chorus of which was 'Nobbut Nobbins,' all joined in, and enthusiasm reached its height.

"My own enthusiasm was at a very low ebb, for I felt sure that Snowball had

melted away by this time, and that except for the memory, nothing would be left of nobbins. But I did my dusky friend injustice. He was waiting to receive me at the stage-door, he led me down a dark passage right into the air outside, and in a few minutes we were seated in the snug little bar-parlour of a tavern known to my friend, with refreshments before us, and, reverently covered over with a silk pocket-handkerchief—our nobbins. It took a long while to count; a great pile of coppers, sixpences and threepenny bits without end, a few shillings, and one half-crown; in all fifteen pounds odd, which we divided. Before we had finished counting, we heard the sharp clatter of hoofs, and the ring of military accoutrements—the dragoons called out to quell a riot at the Royal People's Park. But I crept quietly up by the night train to London, arriving at my own humble home in the early morning, where my poor sick wife was counting the hours of my absence. I think the physic that did her most good that visit, was—nobbins."

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VI. CLARI EATS.

LUNCH, at Hinchford, was announced by a gong. And when, to-day, the thunder that proclaimed so important an event rolled through the white drawing-room, it seemed to act like the breaking of a spell, under which four persons had been bound. The first to obey the disenchantment was, naturally, Lady Quorne; the last was Mademoiselle Clari. But the last was the first to speak.

"I am glad to hear the gong," she said. "I am hungry."

"Then let us all go down together," said Lady Quorne. "You will let me hear you sing presently, Miss March—won't you? It is a long time since we met, Reginald—you and I; not since you used to come in your holidays to Derehurst. I must make your wife's acquaintance one of these days." She was speaking as they went downstairs. "Ah, here is Lord Quorne; this is my cousin Reginald—the clergyman at Deepweald, you know. Miss March, let me introduce you to Lord Quorne."

Celia let herself be introduced formally; but she was not regarding with all the

awe due to him the distinguished amateur of cucumbers. Her heart was beating painfully. Not only had she felt the actual grasp of Clari upon her arm—a sin that, however unintentional, was almost beyond the reach of confession at home—but she found herself in the presence of him towards whom she had vowed silence; Walter Gordon himself was talking to the earl.

“Fräulein Celia!” said Walter. “Miss March and I are old friends—fellow-students,” he explained to the countess. He looked at Clari enquiringly.

“Mademoiselle and I have sung at each other,” said the prima donna, with less expression in her voice than usual; for there was dramatic intention, often inappropriate enough, in the way she said the most commonplace things. But there was no indifference, but the intensest earnestness in every tone, when she added, “And it has hungered me.”

“To hear her again?” smiled Lady Quorne. “There, Miss March—there is a compliment for you.”

“No, to eat,” said Clari.

Walter ought to have known the prima donna by heart, by this time. And he was beginning to suspect her of wearing her soul less openly upon her face than he had once believed. He had at least once seen the tigress loose in her; and the sight had been a piece of insight for him. A man seldom observes a woman so closely, as circumstance had brought him to observe Mademoiselle Clari. And now there was no sign of any of the expressions that he would have expected to see. She did not look ill-tempered, as a jealous woman might who had found a rival. She did not look good-humoured, as a woman of tact would, in like case, have taken care to appear, nor yet indifferent, nor yet patronisingly kind. He could not help watching her as she eat and drank, no less observantly than while she was breakfasting at The Five Adzes. She was something of a gourmande, as all real artists are, and to-day her appetite showed that she had not spoken of being hungry without good reason. But there was a something about even the way in which she eat and drank to-day as if even that process was typical. Why not? Intense people express themselves in the way that is nearest to hand, even if it be no more than in cutting the wing of a fowl. A man eats in one way when he is going to sleep after his meal; in another when he is going to fight a battle, though there

may be but the barest distinction visible to uninterested lookers-on. And somehow Walter fancied that the wing of that particular fowl was representing other food for the knife of the prima donna. She eat as if she meant it—but what it meant was not easy to say.

When we read of a woman, fired with passion, rushing to the piano and finding a safety-valve for her over-wrought feelings by dashing into a maddening whirl of song, the outlet seems natural. But the outlet is equally natural when the piano is represented by anything else that comes nearer to hand. There are very clever women who find it in sweeping down the homes of innocent spiders or in scrubbing floors; they do not feel the less vehemently because they cannot afford to keep a grand piano. And, though there is a shame-faced theory to the contrary, spiritual excitement and bodily hunger are constant companions, when the lungs are as sound as Clari's. She might have her moods and her passions, but she throve on them, beyond all question—as Walter Gordon could not help thinking.

He was sitting opposite to both the women, whom he had been led to think of together, and compared them. He had been growing very observant lately: Clari had more than merely touched his imagination with her infinitely varying moods and caprices that ended in smoke, her tragic thunders in calm air, and her bursts of passion that ended in—luncheon. Imagination, when once roused, must lead somewhere, it is the highway to the heart, as everybody knows; but it does not follow that she who opens the road gate reaches the goal. She may point the way for some companion who could never have opened the gate, but may make far sweeter flowers spring along the road. How was it that at Lindenheim he had found out that Celia March was interesting, piquante in her shy way, amusing to talk to because she listened, modest, sweet-tempered, all that a girl should be—except beautiful? How was it that now her beauty of face struck him as if he had been absolutely blind at Lindenheim? Of course she had grown, and at her time of life the years give beauty instead of taking it away, but even still her chief beauty, as always, lay in her eyes; and if they were beautiful now, they must have been beautiful then, for eyes do not change after childhood. They seemed to him even more beautiful than Clari's. They wanted both flame and heat, but they were sweeter and calmer; to spend one's

life watching Clari's eyes, thought Walter, would be like reading some new book that keeps the mind in a state of perpetual curiosity and excitement from page to page; Celia's, like reading one that one knows by heart and is not weary of for the second or third time of reading.

Observation is certainly a fine quality for a painter, who has only to do with things as they seem. It is worse than Will-o'-the-Wisp to men who wish to know things as they are.

Giulia Clari lunched like a gourmande, as she was. Noëmi Baruc thought and thought like a gourmande too, who sees a fair table spread before her, and with revenge written for the *pièce de résistance* in the menu.

I have sought to keep no secrets—this is not a story with a mystery. I cannot help it if anyone has forgotten the name of Noëmi Baruc, and wonders who was this unnoticed guest at Hinchford. It does not follow that, because people assume it, prime donne are born full fledged—are fruits that have never blossomed. It is true they do not often grow on conventional trees. Sometimes they are picked from wayside hedges, in the shape of beggar girls who wander about from country fair to country fair. Another may be a stage-struck contessa or marchesa. Another is born in the purple—that is to say, on the stage. Another is picked up ripe from a southern market-place; another from some obscure Ghetto. Such had been the destiny of Noëmi Baruc, the pupil of Andrew Gordon.

The girl from the Ghetto, with the earrings dangling before her in the air, shut her eyes, that she might see them better in the dark, and followed them blindly. She let Il Purgatorio, her master, and La Purgatoria, her mistress, drift away like waves that pass one who journeys up the stream, forgetting that she wore on her back a mantilla that, to say the least of it, was not her own. The Carnival had cut her off from her old life in the Ghetto as sharply as if it had been death itself. She simply could not go back. The will of the enchanter was upon her, who had promised her all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them for a song. And then, if she went back, she knew very well that, if she escaped an actual beating, she would be doomed to bread-and-water for some days to come. She was not fond of a bread-and-water diet, even in those days.

In short, the stranger with the strange

name said, "Come," and she went with him.

How it was that the police authorities had nothing to say to the departure from Rome of a stolen mantilla of Spanish lace with a girl inside it, he best knew—unless, indeed, Il Purgatorio, the money-lender, had his own reasons for not putting justice en rapport with his mantilla. At any rate, before night was over she had left the black shadow of the Colosseum, where for the first time she had opened her lips in song. Before noon Rome itself was out of sight, and the next day saw her in a strange city. Such sudden changes absolutely dislocate lives. In two short days she was Noëmi Baruc as little as if she had never borne the name, and had never heard the tongue of La Purgatoria.

And she was not only in a strange city. She was in Paradise. To consider the nature of her relation to the young man who had so summarily carried her there never for a moment occurred to her. He was the enchanter who was to give her her heart's desire: she, the slave of the ring—that is to say, of the earrings, and of all that they typified. In some unknown way she was to sing herself into the heart of the world. Meanwhile, for the cheap price of studies which to her were mere child's play, she had purchased all pleasant sights and sounds, freedom from household slavery, food and drink of the best, a soft bed, and all such common comforts as to her were undreamed-of luxuries. A little study for a few hours a day was a cheap price indeed to pay; to exchange her lace mantilla for a barbarous bonnet and mantle, after the fashion of Paris, was well worth twice the labour, in her estimation of things.

She missed nothing; for she had never had anything to miss except such things as gave the piquancy of contrast to present luxury; just as a man whose work compels him to get up earlier than he likes misses his week-day necessity on Sunday morning. She had a lodging to herself—a room in a palace. Her master had another to himself; but she had more company than ever in her life before, for he visited her at regular hours twice every day. And he was with her, in a sense, even when he was not with her; the mesmeric force that had compelled her to follow him formed a sort of atmosphere in which her life developed itself.

But, so far, she did not feel her life a slavery. It was all too new; and, compared with the service of Il Purgatorio,

the service of Andrew Gordon was absolute freedom. He set himself to educate her, not only in song. In most things he did not succeed very well. His pupil was very far from clever, and was a little old for learning. Had not his patience been infinite, the alphabet itself would have been to her for ever a mystery. Books were not ear-rings even; and there was not one word about herself in any of them. But when it came to song!

Infinite impatience could not have kept pace with her. It seemed as if her throat had been sealed up all her life, and that now the seal was broken. As if song had been gathering in her for years, in order to overflow and burst out as soon as space had been made by the merest prick of a needle. It must have seemed part of the magic, had it not seemed so natural to her to sing. It was her one talent; but it made up by its excess for the lack of every other. She was not one for whom rules are made; she out-raced system, and left law behind her. She sang to herself, or to her audience of one, as if every note were to buy her a diamond, of water in proportion to beauty of tone.

And so for some time, unmeasured by her, the days went on in such delightful contrast to those of the Ghetto, that she was unaware of their barren monotony. But she was not the only inhabitant of the palace which the marchese, its owner, let in lodgings, contenting himself with three or four rooms on the second floor.

One day—for the first time—she received a visitor. He was a man of imposing appearance so far as stature, high shoulders, embonpoint, and a profusion of jewellery could make him; whose features recalled memories to her mind, that were connected with foul smells and the other characteristics of once upon a time. His eyes were bright and dewy, and his features rather eastern than southern in their contour.

"Signorina," he began and continued in fluent but vile Italian, "I am Prosper."

"Prosper?"

"Yes, I. Only last night I arrived from Moscow."

"From Moscow?"

"Mademoiselle has never sung? No. But walls have ears, mademoiselle—the ears of Prosper. Frankly, I want singers; you want an impresario. I am not a man of words. I come, I hear, I engage. Me voici, vous voilà—voilà tout."

Noëmi felt her heart beat. The wizard had fulfilled his promise; the glory was at hand. She had never heard either of

Prosper or of Moscow, but if she was to have the whole world at her feet, there was no need to trouble herself about biography or geography in detail.

"No," she said, "I have never sung."

"No, or I should have heard you; and no, or I should not have engaged you. When I want singers I do not go to the old; I discover the new. That is my principle. It is a grand début I offer you, mademoiselle—a grand début, for which many would come to me on their knees. You shall have good parts; one whole season; more if you succeed. And you will: I do not engage failures, mademoiselle. I will give you five hundred francs; and when I say I pay, I pay."

"Five hundred francs?"

"Yes, five hundred, mademoiselle."

"And for the season?"

"For the season."

Have I said that Noëmi Baruc was bred and born in the Roman Ghetto, and in the house of Il Purgatorio? It requires no literary talent to be aware that a single diamond worth having is not to be bought for five-and-twenty pounds.

"Yes, I will sing. And you will give me five thousand francs——"

"For one season?"

"Every week, signor."

Andrew Gordon's pupil was, decidedly improving. Prosper raised his hands and cast up his eyes.

"Five thousand francs—a week! Who ever heard of such a thing? Why Saffi herself gets no more in London!"

The girl's eyes shone. "Then I will go to London."

"Do you know what you say? Why, any girl in her senses would pay me—pay herself to have a début that I give you and pay you for! Think, mademoiselle."

"I think," said Noëmi. "I think I will sing for five thousand francs every week."

"If you can get them—no doubt! Perhaps you will find someone to give it you. But if you do—it will not be Prosper. No. I will go farther before I engage, mademoiselle." But he did not make any sign of going. Noëmi did not answer a word, but simply looked as stubborn as a mule. For a moment, a sort of duel of looks passed between the two.

But Noëmi must not be credited with more business talent than was due to her. What she really thought was, "If I cannot sing for all I want, I will not sing at all." And she merely said five thousand a week because Prosper had said five hundred the

season. She had made a long shot; but was beginning to find it tell.

"Well," said Prosper, "I do not bargain—I engage. Say one thousand for the season. It is double what I ought to give; but never mind."

"Five thousand," said Noëmi.

"Are you a mad woman?"

"If it is mad to say five thousand francs a week—yes, signor."

Prosper groaned with what might have been amazement, or despair, or both combined. But his groan brought him no inch nearer the door. Another duel of eyes passed between them—something like the game of moro, where fingers are counted and a game seems to be won or lost by clairvoyance, rather than by commonplace seeing. We dull Northerners and Westerns do not understand such things. We have to say "checkmate" before we know whether white or black has won. But cleverer races bargain for sport; not because they do not know by instinct, from the third or fourth move of the opening, which is going to win.

"She is worth six thousand francs a week. She knows it, and knows that I think so. And if I don't give her five, somebody else will give her six; and I shall lose a prize. Take five thousand a week, and I shall have made a good bargain; and you know that too, and thank you for not asking six"—so said the silence of Prosper, while his hands and eyes went up still higher in the needful semblance of horror and despair.

"I did not know I could get so much, but I see now. He would give me anything I asked—checkmate!"—said the silence of Noëmi.

"One thousand a week. There!" said Prosper. No bargain must be made without bargaining.

"Two thousand. Say three. Well, then, I don't mind ruin for just once—four." He paused.

The Ghetto blood understood the pause by instinct. Custom demanded some concession on her part, or there would have been no bargain.

"Four thousand five hundred," said Noëmi, carelessly.

Prosper stopped despairing. So long as she took off a centime, honour was satisfied.

But so exciting had been a process, of

which no Englishman may hope to understand fully either the delicate points of etiquette or the charm, that neither had been aware of a third party to the duel, who stood by with pale face and sternly angry brows.

"The signorina is engaged to me," said her master, coldly.

"Pardon, monsieur," said Prosper, politely; that is to say, as politely as a man can who fears he has bargained in vain. "I have the word of mademoiselle. May I ask the honour of an introduction, monsieur? I am Prosper."

"The signorina will not sing for a paltry five thousand francs a week—no, nor ten," said Andrew Gordon, firmly. He did not observe how Noëmi's eyes shone. She believed implicitly in the magic of her master. Was it the purse of Fortunatus itself and all Golconda that she was to sing for? "She will sing for art—if you ever heard of such a thing."

"Monsieur le père on monsieur le mari?" asked Prosper, falling into his native language out of the villainous Italian he had been speaking to Noëmi. "Mister the father or mister the husband? Monsieur is English, I perceive."

Andrew Gordon considered for one moment, no more. He must seize upon some claim to bind her to him in such wise that no impresario in all Europe might so much as tempt her from him, and from the service to which he had devoted her.

"Her husband," he answered. "Good morning, monsieur."

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A Weekly Journal

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CHARLES DICKENS

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER X. THE DEAN AS A SPORTING MAN.

IN Brotherton the dean's performance in the run from Cross Hall Holt was almost as much talked of as Mrs. Houghton's accident. There had been rumours of things that he had done in the same line after taking orders, when a young man, of runs that he had ridden, and even of visits which he had made to Newmarket, and other wicked places. But, as far as Brotherton knew, there had been nothing of all this since the dean had been a dean. Though he was constantly on horseback, he had never been known to do more than perhaps look at a meet, and it was understood through Brotherton generally that he had forbidden his daughter to hunt. But now, no sooner was his daughter married, and the necessity of setting an example to her at an end, than the dean, with a rosette in his hat—for so the story was told—was after the hounds like a sporting farmer or a mere country gentleman! On the very next day Mr. Groschut told the whole story to the bishop. But Mr. Groschut had not seen the performance, and the bishop affected to disbelieve it.

"I'm afraid, my lord," said the chaplain, "I'm afraid you'll find it's true."

"If he rides after every pack of dogs in the county, I don't know that I can help it," said the bishop. With this Mr. Groschut was by no means inclined to agree. A bishop is as much entitled to cause enquiries to be made into the moral conduct of a dean as of any other country clergyman in his diocese.

"Suppose he were to take to gambling on the turf," said Mr. Groschut, with much horror expressed in his tone and countenance.

"But riding after a pack of dogs isn't gambling on the turf," said the bishop, who, though he would have liked to possess the power of putting down the dean, by no means relished the idea of being beaten in an attempt to do so.

And Mr. Canon Holdenough heard of it. "My dear," he said to his wife, "Manor Cross is coming out strong in the sporting way. Not only is Mrs. Houghton laid up there with a broken limb, but your brother's father-in-law took the brush on the same day."

"The dean!" said Lady Alice.

"So they tell me."

"He was always so particular in not letting Mary ride over a single fence. He would hardly let her go to a meet on horseback."

"Many fathers do what they won't let their daughters do. The dean has been always giving signs that he would like to break out a little."

"Can they do anything to him?"

"Oh dear no; not if he were to hunt a pack of hounds himself, as far as I know."

"But I suppose it's wrong, canon," said the clerical wife.

"Yes, I think it's wrong, because it will scandalise. Everything that gives offence is wrong, unless it be something that is on other grounds expedient. If it be true, we shall hear about it a good deal here, and it will not contribute to brotherly love and friendship among us clergymen."

There was another canon at Brotherton,

one Dr. Pountner, a red-faced man, very fond of his dinner, a man of infinite pluck, and much attached to the cathedral, towards the reparation of which he had contributed liberally. And, having an ear for music, he had done much to raise the character of the choir. Though Dr. Pountner's sermons were supposed to be the worst ever heard from the pulpit of the cathedral, he was, on account of the above-good deeds, the most popular clergyman in the city. "So I'm told you've been distinguishing yourself, Mr. Dean," said the doctor, meeting our friend in the Close.

"Have I done so lately, more than is usual with me?" asked the dean, who had not hitherto heard of the rumour of his performances.

"I am told that you were so much ahead the other day in the hunting-field, that you were unable to give assistance to the poor lady who broke her arm."

"Oh, that's it! If I do anything at all, though I may do it but once in a dozen years, I like to do it well, Dr. Pountner. I wish I thought that you could follow my example, and take a little exercise. It would be very good for you." The doctor was a heavy man, and hardly walked much beyond the confines of the Close or his own garden. Though a bold man, he was not so ready as the dean, and had no answer at hand. "Yes," continued our friend, "I did go a mile or two with them, and I enjoyed it amazingly. I wish with all my heart there was no prejudice against clergymen hunting."

"I think it would be an abominable practice," said Dr. Pountner, passing on.

The dean himself would have thought nothing more about it had there not appeared a few lines on the subject in a weekly newspaper called *The Brotherton Church*, which was held to be a pestilential little rag by all the Close. Deans, canons, and minor canons were all agreed as to this, Dr. Pountner hating *The Brotherton Church* quite as sincerely as did the dean. The *Brotherton Church* was edited nominally by a certain Mr. Grease, a very pious man who had long striven, but hitherto in vain, to get orders. But it was supposed by many that the paper was chiefly inspired by Mr. Grosebut. It was always very laudatory of the bishop. It had distinguished itself by its elaborate opposition to ritual. Its mission was to put down popery in the diocese of Brotherton. It always sneered at the chapter generally, and very often said

severe things of the dean. On this occasion the paragraph was as follows: "There is a rumour current that Dean Lovelace was out with the Brotherton foxhounds last Wednesday, and that he rode with the pack all the day, leading the field. We do not believe this, but we hope that, for the sake of the cathedral and for his own sake, he will condescend to deny the report." On the next Saturday there was another paragraph, with a reply from the dean: "We have received from the Dean of Brotherton the following startling letter, which we publish without comment. What our opinion on the subject may be our readers will understand:

"Deanery, November, 187—

"SIR,—You have been correctly informed that I was out with the Brotherton foxhounds on Wednesday week last. The other reports which you have published, and as to which, after publication, you have asked for information, are unfortunately incorrect. I wish I could have done as well as my enemies accuse me of doing.—I am, sir, your humble servant,
HENRY LOVELACE.

"To the Editor of *The Brotherton Church*."

The dean's friends were unanimous in blaming him for having taken any notice of the attack. The bishop, who was at heart an honest man and a gentleman, regretted it. All the chapter were somewhat ashamed of it. The minor canons were agreed that it was below the dignity of a dean. Dr. Pountner, who had not yet forgotten the allusion to his obesity, whispered in some clerical ear that nothing better could be expected out of a stable; and Canon Holdenough, who really liked the dean in spite of certain differences of opinion, expostulated with him about it.

"I would have let it pass," said the canon. "Why notice it at all?"

"Because I would not have anyone suppose that I was afraid to notice it. Because I would not have it thought that I had gone out with the hounds, and was ashamed of what I had done."

"Nobody who knows you would have thought that."

"I am proud to think that nobody who knows me would. I make as many mistakes as another, and am sorry for them afterwards. But I am never ashamed. I'll tell you what happened, not to justify my hunting, but to justify my letter. I was over at Manor Cross, and I went to the meet, because Mary went. I have

not done such a thing before since I came to Brotherton, because there is—what I will call a feeling against it. When I was there I rode a field or two with them, and I can tell you I enjoyed it.”

“I daresay you did.”

“Then, very soon after the fox broke, there was that brook at which Mrs. Houghton hurt herself. I happened to jump it, and the thing became talked about because of her accident. After that we came out on the Brotherton road, and I went back to Manor Cross. Do not suppose that I should have been ashamed of myself if I had gone on even half-a-dozen more fields.”

“I am sure you wouldn’t.”

“The thing in itself is not bad. Nevertheless—thinking as the world around us does about hunting—a clergyman in my position would be wrong to hunt often. But a man who can feel horror at such a thing as this is a prig in religion. If, as is more likely, a man affects horror, he is a hypocrite. I believe that most clergymen will agree with me in that; but there is no clergyman in the diocese of whose agreement I feel more certain than of yours.”

“It is the letter, not the hunting, to which I object.”

“There was an apparent cowardice in refraining from answering such an attack. I am aware, canon, of a growing feeling of hostility to myself.”

“Not in the chapter.”

“In the diocese. And I know whence it comes, and I think I can understand its cause. Let what will come of it, I am not going to knock under. I want to quarrel with no man, and certainly with no clergyman; but I am not going to be frightened out of my own manner of life, or my own manner of thinking, by fear of a quarrel.”

“Nobody doubts your courage; but what is the use of fighting when there is nothing to win? Let that wretched newspaper alone. It is beneath you and me, dean.”

“Very much beneath us, and so is your butler beneath you. But if he asks you a question, you answer him. To tell the truth, I would rather they should call me indiscreet than timid. If I did not feel that it would be really wrong and painful to my friends, I would go out hunting three days next week, to let them know that I am not to be cowed.”

There was a good deal said at Manor

Cross about the newspaper correspondence, and some condemnation of the dean expressed by the ladies, who thought that he had lowered himself by addressing a reply to the editor. In the heat of discussion a word or two was spoken by Lady Susanna—who entertained special objections to all things low—which made Mary very angry. “I think papa is at any rate a better judge than you can be,” she said. Between sisters as sisters generally are, or even sisters-in-law, this would not be much; but at Manor Cross it was felt to be misconduct. Mary was so much younger than they were! And then she was the granddaughter of a tradesman! No doubt they all thought that they were willing to admit her among themselves on terms of equality; but then there was a feeling among them that she ought to repay this great goodness by a certain degree of humility and submission. From day to day the young wife strengthened herself in a resolution that she would not be humble, and would not be submissive.

Lady Susanna, when she heard the words, drew herself up with an air of offended dignity. “Mary, my dear,” said Lady Sarah, “is not that a little unkind?”

“I think it is unkind to say that papa is indiscreet,” said the dean’s daughter. “I wonder what you’d all think if I were to say a word against dear mamma.” She had been specially instructed to call the marchioness mamma.

“The dean is not my father-in-law,” said Lady Amelia very proudly, as though, in making the suggestion, she begged it to be understood that under no circumstances could such a connection have been possible.

“But he’s my papa, and I shall stand up for him; and I do say that he must know more about such things than any lady.” Then Lady Susanna got up and marched majestically out of the room.

Lord George was told of this, and found himself obliged to speak to his wife. “I’m afraid there has been something between you and Susanna, dear.”

“She abused papa, and I told her papa knew better than she did, and then she walked out of the room.”

“I don’t suppose she meant to—abuse the dean.”

“She called him names.”

“She said he was indiscreet.”

“That is calling him names.”

“No, my dear, indiscreet is an epithet; and even were it a noun substantive, as a

name must be, it could only be one name." It was certainly very hard to fall in love with a man who could talk about epithets so very soon after his marriage; but yet she would go on trying.

"Dear George," she said, "don't you scold me. I will do anything you tell me, but I don't like them to say hard-things of papa. You are not angry with me for taking papa's part, are you?"

He kissed her, and told her that he was not in the least angry with her; but nevertheless, he went on to insinuate, that if she could bring herself to show something of submission to his sisters, it would make her own life happier and theirs and his. "I would do anything I could to make your life happy," she said.

CHAPTER XL. LORD AND LADY GEORGE GO UP TO TOWN.

TIME went on, and the day arranged for the migration to London came round. After much delicate fencing on one side and the other, this was fixed for the 31st January. The fencing took place between the dean, acting on behalf of his daughter, and the ladies of the Manor Cross family generally. They, though they conceived themselves to have had many causes of displeasure with Mary, were not the less anxious to keep her at Manor Cross. They would all at any moment have gladly assented to an abandonment of the London house, and had taught themselves to look upon the London house as an allurement of Satan, most unwisely contrived and countenanced by the dean. And there was no doubt that, as the dean acted on behalf of his daughter, so did they act on behalf of their brother. He could not himself oppose the London house; but he disliked it and feared it, and now, at last, thoroughly repented himself of it. But it had been a stipulation made at the marriage; and the dean's money had been spent. The dean had been profuse with his money, and had shown himself to be a more wealthy man than anyone at Manor Cross had suspected. Mary's fortune was no doubt her own; but the furniture had been in a great measure supplied by the dean, and the dean had paid the necessary premium on going into the house. Lord George felt it to be impossible to change his mind after all that had been done; but he had been quite willing to postpone the evil day as long as possible.

Lady Susanna was especially full of fears, and, it must be owned, especially

inimical to all Mary's wishes. She was the one who had perhaps been most domineering to her brother's wife, and she was certainly the one whose domination Mary resisted with the most settled determination. There was a self-abnegation about Lady Sarah, a downright goodness, and at the same time an easily-handled magisterial authority, which commanded reverence. After three months of residence at Manor Cross, Mary was willing to acknowledge that Lady Sarah was more than a sister-in-law,—that her nature partook of divine omnipotence, and that it compelled respect, whether given willingly or unwillingly. But to none of the others would her spirit thus humble itself, and especially not to Lady Susanna. Therefore Lady Susanna was hostile, and therefore Lady Susanna was quite sure that Mary would fall into great trouble amidst the pleasures of the metropolis.

"After all," she said to her elder sister, "what is one thousand five hundred pounds a year to keep up a house in London?"

"It will only be for a few months," said Lady Sarah.

"Of course she must have a carriage, and then George will find himself altogether in the hands of the dean. That is what I fear. The dean has done very well with himself, but he is not a man whom I like to trust altogether."

"He is at any rate generous with his money."

"He is bound to be that, or he could not hold up his head at all. He has nothing else to depend on. Did you hear what Dr. Pountner said about him the other day? Since that affair with the newspaper, he has gone down very much in the chapter. I am sure of that."

"I think you are a little hard upon him, Susanna."

"You must feel that he is very wrong about this house in London. Why is a man, because he's married, to be taken away from all his own pursuits? If she could not accommodate herself to his tastes, she should not have accepted him."

"Let us be just," said Lady Sarah.

"Certainly, let us be just," said Lady Amelia, who in these conversations seldom took much part, unless when called upon to support her eldest sister.

"Of course we should be just," said Lady Susanna.

"She did not accept him," said Lady Sarah, "till he had agreed to comply with

the dean's wish that they should spend part of their time in London."

"He was very weak," said Lady Susanna.

"I wish it could have been otherwise," continued Lady Sarah; "but we can hardly suppose that the tastes of a young girl from Brotherton should be the same as ours. I can understand that Mary should find Manor Cross dull."

"Dull!" exclaimed Lady Susanna.

"Dull!" ejaculated Lady Amelia, constrained on this occasion to differ even from her eldest sister. "I can't understand that she should find Manor Cross dull, particularly while she has her husband with her."

"The bargain, at any rate, was made," said Lady Sarah, "before the engagement was settled; and as the money is hers, I do not think we have a right to complain. I am very sorry that it should be so. Her character is very far from being formed, and his tastes are so completely fixed that nothing will change them."

"And then there's that Mrs. Houghton!" said Lady Susanna. Mrs. Houghton had of course left Manor Cross long since; but she had left a most unsatisfactory feeling behind her in the minds of all the Manor Cross ladies. This arose not only from their personal dislike, but from a suspicion, a most agonising suspicion, that their brother was more fond than he should have been of the lady's society. It must be understood that Mary herself knew nothing of this, and was altogether free from such suspicion. But the three sisters, and the marchioness under their tuition, had decided that it would be very much better that Lord George should see no more of Mrs. Houghton. He was not, they thought, infatuated in such a fashion that he would run to London after her; but, when in London, he would certainly be thrown into her society. "I cannot bear to think of it," continued Lady Susanna. Lady Amelia shook her head. "I think, Sarah, you ought to speak to him seriously. No man has higher ideas of duty than he has; and if he be made to think of it, he will avoid her."

"I have spoken," replied Lady Sarah, almost in a whisper.

"Well!"

"Well!"

"Was he angry?"

"How did he bear it?"

"He was not angry, but he did not bear it very well. He told me that he certainly found her to be attractive, but that he

thought he had power enough to keep himself free from any such fault as that. I asked him to promise me not to see her; but he declined to make a promise, which he said he might not be able to keep."

"She is a horrid woman, and Mary, I am afraid, likes her," said Lady Susanna. "I know that evil will come of it."

Sundry scenes counter to this were enacted at the Deanery. Mary was in the habit of getting herself taken over to Brotherton more frequently than the ladies liked; but it was impossible that they should openly oppose her visits to her father. On one occasion, early in January, she had got her husband to ride over with her, and was closeted with the dean while he was away in the city. "Papa," she said, "I almost think that I'll give up the house in Munster-court."

"Give it up! Look here, Mary; you'll have no happiness in life unless you can make up your mind not to allow those old ladies at Manor Cross to sit upon you."

"It is not for their sake. He does not like it, and I would do anything for him."

"That is all very well; and I would be the last to advise you to oppose his wishes, if I did not see that the effect would be to make him subject to his sisters' dominion as well as you. Would you like him to be always under their thumb?"

"No, papa; I shouldn't like that."

"It was because I foresaw all this that I stipulated so expressly as I did that you should have a house of your own. Every woman, when she marries, should be emancipated from other domestic control than that of her husband. From the nature of Lord George's family this would have been impossible at Manor Cross, and therefore I insisted on a house in town. I could do this the more freely because the wherewithal was to come from us, and not from them. Do not disturb what I have done."

"I will not go against you, of course, papa."

"And remember always that this is to be done as much for his sake as for yours. His position has been very peculiar. He has no property of his own, and he has lived there with his mother and sisters, till the feminine influences of the house have almost domineered him. It is your duty to assist in freeing him from this." Looking at the matter in the light now presented to her, Mary began to think that her father was right. "With a hus-

band there should at any rate be only one feminine influence," he added, laughing.

"I shall not overrule him, I shall not try," said Mary, smiling.

"At any rate, do not let other women rule him. By degrees he will learn to enjoy London society, and so will you. You will spend half the year at Manor Cross or the Deanery, and by degrees both he and you will be emancipated. For myself, I can conceive nothing more melancholy than would be his slavery and yours, if you were to live throughout the year with those old women." Then, too, he said something to her of the satisfaction which she herself would receive from living in London, and told her that for her, life itself had hardly as yet been commenced. She received her lessons with thankfulness and gratitude, but with something of wonder that he should so openly recommend to her a manner of life, which she had hitherto been taught to regard as worldly.

After that no further hint was given to her that the house in London might yet be abandoned. When riding back with her husband, she had been clever enough to speak of the thing as a fixed certainty; and he had then known that he also must regard it as fixed. "You had better not say anything more about it," he said one day almost angrily to Lady Susanna; and then nothing more had been said about it—to him.

There were other causes of confusion—at Manor Cross, of confusion so great that from day to day the marchioness would declare herself unable to go through the troubles before her. The workmen were already in the big house, preparing for the demolition and reconstruction of everything as soon as she should be gone; and other workmen were already demolishing and reconstructing Cross Hall. The sadness of all this and the weight on the old lady's mind were increased by the fact that no member of the family had received so much even as a message from the marquis himself, since it had been decided that his wishes should not be obeyed. Over and over again the dowager attempted to give way, and suggested that they should all depart and be out of sight. It seemed to her that when a marquis is a marquis, he ought to have his own way, though it be never so unreasonable. Was he not the head of the family? But Lady Sarah was resolved, and carried her point. Were they all to

be pitched down into some strange corner where they would be no better than other women, incapable of doing good or exercising influence, by the wish of one man who had never done any good anywhere, or used his own influence legitimately? Lady Sarah was no coward, and Lady Sarah stuck to Cross Hall, though in doing so she had very much to endure. "I won't go out, my lady," said Price, "not till the day when her ladyship is ready to come in. I can put up with things, and I'll see as all is done as your ladyship wishes." Price, though he was a sporting farmer, and though men were in the habit of drinking cherry brandy at his house, and though naughty things had been said about him, had in these days become Lady Sarah's prime minister at Cross Hall, and was quite prepared in that capacity to carry on war against the marquis.

When the day came for the departure of Mary and her husband, a melancholy feeling pervaded the whole household. A cook had been sent up from Brotherton who had lived at Manor Cross many years previously. Lord George took a man who had waited on himself lately at the old house, and Mary had her own maid who had come with her when she married. They had therefore been forced to look for but one strange servant. But this made the feeling the stronger that they would all be strange up in London. This was so strong with Lord George, that it almost amounted to fear. He knew that he did not know how to live in London. He belonged to the Carlton, as became a conservative nobleman; but he very rarely entered it, and never felt himself at home when he was there. And Mary, though she had been quite resolved, since the conversation with her father, that she would be firm about her house, still was not without her own dread. She herself had no personal friends in town—not one but Mrs. Houghton, as to whom she heard nothing but evil words from the ladies around her. There had been an attempt made to get one of the sisters to go up with them for the first month. Lady Sarah had positively refused, almost with indignation. Was it to be supposed that she would desert her mother at so trying a time? Lady Amelia was then asked, and with many regrets declined the invitation. She had not dared to use her own judgment, and Lady Sarah had not cordially advised her to go. Lady Sarah had thought

that Lady Susanna would be the most useful. But Lady Susanna was not asked. There were a few words on the subject between Lord George and his wife. Mary, remembering her father's advice, had determined that she would not be sat upon, and had whispered to her husband that Susanna was always severe to her. When, therefore, the time came, they departed from Manor Cross without any protecting spirit.

There was something sad in this, even to Mary. She knew that she was taking her husband away from the life he liked, and that she herself was going to a life as to which she could not even guess whether she would like it or not. But she had the satisfaction of feeling that she was at last going to begin to live as a married woman. Hitherto she had been treated as a child. If there was danger, there was, at any rate, the excitement which danger produces. "I am almost glad that we are going alone, George," she said. "It seems to me that we have never been alone yet."

He wished to be gracious and loving to her, and yet he was not disposed to admit anything which might seem to imply that he had become tired of living with his own family. "It is very nice, but——"

"But what, dear?"

"Of course I am anxious about my mother just at present."

"She is not to move for two months yet."

"No—not to move; but there are so many things to be done."

"You can run down whenever you please."

"That's expensive; but of course it must be done."

"Say that you'll like being with me alone." They had the compartment of the railway-carriage all to themselves, and she, as she spoke, leaned against him, inviting him to caress her. "You don't think it a trouble, do you, having to come and live with me?" Of course he was conquered, and said, after his nature, what prettiest things he could to her, assuring her that he would sooner live with her than with anyone in the world, and promising that he would always endeavour to make her happy. She knew that he was doing his best to be a loving husband, and she felt, therefore, that she was bound to be loyal in her endeavours to love him; but at the same time, at the

very moment in which she was receiving his words with outward show of satisfied love, her imagination was picturing to her something else which would have been so immeasurably superior, if only it had been possible.

That evening they dined together, alone; and it was the first time that they had ever done so, except at an inn. Never before had been imposed on her the duty of seeing that his dinner was prepared for him. There certainly was very little of duty to perform in the matter, for he was a man indifferent as to what he eat, or what he drank. The plainness of the table at Manor Cross had surprised Mary, after the comparative luxury of the Deanery. All her lessons at Manor Cross had gone to show that eating was not a delectation to be held in high esteem. But still she was careful that everything around him should be nice. The furniture was new, the glasses and crockery were new. Few, if any, of the articles used, had ever been handled before. All her bridal presents were there; and no doubt there was present to her mind the fact that everything in the house had in truth been given to him by her. If only she could make the things pleasant! If only he would allow himself to be taught that nice things are nice! She hovered around him, touching him every now and then with her light fingers, moving a lock of his hair, and then stooping over him and kissing his brow. It might still be that she would be able to galvanise him into that lover's vitality, of which she had dreamed. He never rebuffed her; he did not scorn her kisses, or fail to smile when his hair was moved; he answered every word she spoke to him carefully and courteously; he admired her pretty things when called upon to admire them. But through it all, she was quite aware that she had not galvanised him as yet.

Of course there were books. Every proper preparation had been made for rendering the little house pleasant. In the evening she took from her shelf a delicate little volume of poetry, something exquisitely bound, pretty to look at, and sweet to handle, and settled herself down to be happy in her own drawing-room. But she soon looked up from the troubles of Aurora Leigh to see what her husband was doing. He was comfortable in his chair, but was busy with the columns of *The Brothershire Herald*.

"Dear me, George, have you brought that musty old paper up here?"

"Why shouldn't I read the Herald here, as well as at Manor Cross?"

"Oh yes, if you like it."

"Of course I want to know what is being done in the county."

But when next she looked, the county had certainly faded from his mind, for he was fast asleep.

On that occasion she did not care very much for Aurora Leigh. Her mind was hardly tuned to poetry of that sort. The things around her were too important to allow her mind to indulge itself with foreign cares. And then she found herself looking at the watch. At Manor Cross ten o'clock every night brought all the servants into the drawing-room. First the butler would come and place the chairs, and then the maids, and then the coachman and footman would follow. Lord George read the prayers, and Mary had always thought them to be very tiring. But she now felt that it would almost be a relief if the butler would come in and place the chairs.

A FRENCH DETECTIVE STORY.

THIS is how I came to be mixed up with certain detectives of the Rue de Jérusalem, the Scotland-yard of Paris.

A friend of mine, a solicitor, had among his clients a firm of East India brokers, into which had been recently admitted as a partner the son of the senior member of the house. This young man had by no means turned out well. He had not only been extravagant, but utterly reckless in money matters, and had lately capped his previous offences by absconding to the Continent, and taking with him ten thousand pounds' worth of foreign bonds and securities, that were not only the property of the firm, but which formed the nest-egg on which the partners relied in case of a rainy day. Like most foreign securities, these bonds were payable "to bearer," and were therefore all the more easy to negotiate or dispose of. For several reasons the firm did not wish to make their loss public. In the first place, doing so would have been a severe, if not a fatal, blow to their credit in the City; and, secondly, the other partners were naturally very unwilling to publish the dishonesty of an individual whose father was the head of their establishment. Somehow or other, it had been ascer-

tained that the absconded partner had gone to Paris. The affair had been placed in the hands of my friend, who, as I have said, was their solicitor, and his plan was to try and recover the securities on payment of a certain sum. As a matter of course, it was to be expected those persons in whose hands they were pledged would ask as much as possible for these documents; and that, if they knew that legally there was a doubt if they could be looked upon as stolen, their demands would rise in proportion.

To me was entrusted the task of getting back the bonds. It was agreed that I was to start the next day; that I was to pay as little as possible for the recovery; and that I was to keep the whole affair as much as possible in the dark.

Some of the peculiarities of the French detectives and their system struck me very forcibly even before I landed at Boulogne. On board the same steamer with me there happened to be very few passengers; but amongst them was an elderly, very gentlemanly-looking Frenchman, who spoke English well, although with a very decided accent. I am what is called a good sailor, and always enjoy a run across the Channel, even in the most stormy days. As I was smoking my cigar in the bow of the steamer, and watching an ironclad in the distance that was toiling up Channel, the Frenchman of whom I speak made his way up to me, and begged the favour of a cigar-light, evidently with the intention of there and then commencing a conversation. He was a spare, middle-aged man, well set up, about fifty years of age, with iron-gray hair and moustache, no whiskers or beard, and with the omnipresent red ribbon in his button-hole. He was well-dressed, had good manners, and all the outward and visible signs of a retired officer of the French army. After talking for some time on indifferent matters, he asked me if I was not Monsieur So-and-so, mentioning my right name. Thinking he was some individual I had met in Paris or elsewhere on the Continent, I replied in the affirmative.

"Ah," said he; "I never forget a face or a name. Let me introduce myself as Monsieur X., of the police correctionnelle secrète de Paris. I have been engaged in a petite affaire in London. Your police wanted someone who could identify a certain individual, and I was sent over for that purpose. I happened to be in the bureau at Scotland-yard when monsieur came there last Wednesday, and one of the

inspectors pointed you out as a gentleman about to proceed to Paris to recover some securities which had been stolen. If I can be of any use to monsieur over yonder in the Rue de Jérusalem, I shall only be too happy."

I thanked my new acquaintance very much, and told him that though I had a letter of introduction from the French Embassy to the chef de police correctionnelle in Paris, I should be very glad indeed to avail myself of his services. We then had a little refreshment together, and agreed to travel in company with each other to Paris.

In the train, as well as in the steamer, my friend talked a good deal about our English police system, and more particularly about our English detectives. The latter he declared to be "*des excellents gens*," and "*des braves hommes*;" but was not a little astonished at their way of doing work, which, as he said, would never suit Paris or France. "Your secret police," he said, "are no more secret than your police in uniform. Everybody knows them, and they even dress so exactly alike that they might as well wear the blue tunic with the number on the collar. This is not the first or second time I have been in London, and it has always struck me that your rascals and vagabonds know far more what your detectives are doing than the detectives know about the rascals."

"We," he continued, "divide our police into two great divisions—*la police politique* and *la police correctionnelle*. Of the former you have none at all. So much the better for you. The police *correctionnelle* we subdivide into two categories: those who wear uniform, and those who don't. The former are for keeping order in the streets, at the doors of public buildings, and other places where there are crowds; also, they have to deal with ordinary thieves, housebreakers, and rogues of the lower orders. For instance, if I happened to be passing through the streets of Paris and saw a fight, a tumult, or other disturbance, I should not dream of interfering. It would be the business of the *sergents-de-ville* to do so. This part of the London police duty is admirably performed. Your policemen do their work in the streets, and whenever there is a crowd or a crush, with a good temper and forbearance that is beyond all praise. But it must be admitted that this is very much owing to the English people themselves. With the exception of the lowest of the

low, the English are a people who love order. And if a policeman is doing his duty, nine Englishmen out of ten would step forward and assist him, if he were in a difficulty or were outnumbered by what you call the roughs. Now, in France it is quite different. With Frenchmen—or at least, with the vast majority of my compatriots—the authorities, or the government, or the executive, call them what you will, are certain to be in the wrong. This is why France has never flourished unless when governed by a hand of iron. I love my country and I love my countrymen; but this does not prevent me from seeing the faults of the latter. And there can be no doubt but what, in their heart of hearts, nineteen out of every twenty Frenchmen think that they are fully capable of making their own laws, being their own executive, their own police, their own clergy, and their own doctors. And this is why our *sergents-de-ville* have often to be assisted by the *gensdarmes*, and the *gensdarmes* have frequently to be supplemented by the military. Now in England it is quite different. Everyone believes that there are in society different grades and ranks; and so no one, except the most abandoned vagabonds, would lift their hand against what is done for the general good. This is one reason why your visible police have a much easier time than ours."

"But," said I, "do you not approve of our secret police—our detectives?"

"No," said the Frenchman, "I do not. I may be wrong, but they don't appear to me to know the very commencement of their work. For instance, as your London detective goes along the streets the policemen on duty speak to him, or give him a nod of recognition, or, if he is a superior, salute him. You saw me a little while ago at Boulogne"—we were then in the train, on our way to Paris—"pass a number of *sergents-de-ville* when we disembarked. Did any one of them make me a sign of recognition?"

"No," said I, "they certainly did not. I was close behind you, and observed that not one of them appeared ever to have seen you before."

"Bon," said the Frenchman; "and yet they all know me as well as I know my superiors in Paris. But, in fact, even you, monsieur," he said, addressing me, "have only my word for it that I have anything whatever to do with the police. And if you were to take off my clothes, search all the pockets, and cut out all the linings, you

would not find one scrap of paper which would show you that I have anything to do with the Rue de Jérusalem."

"But," said I, "after a time people must get to know your appearance, and must mark you down as Monsieur So-and-so of the police force, in the same way that any banker, merchant, or other private individual would be noted down by his neighbours."

"Ah, mon cher monsieur," he replied, "how little you English know of the working of our secret police, of what you call detectives! If my appearance and my vocation were known, even to my landlord and my concierge, I would be of no more use to the secret police of Paris than a pair of boots without soles would be to an infantry soldier."

"You don't suppose that I always go about in the same costume! It is true that I leave my house every morning in the same dress; and if you were to ask my concierge or any of my neighbours who and what I am, you would be told that my name is So-and-so—que je suis décoré, et que je suis dans les affaires—which is equivalent to what you English call 'something in the City.'"

"Do you ever, if I may ask the question, use disguises or dresses so as to make yourself pass for something else than what you really are?"

"Mais, comment!" replied the policeman, "that is one of our especial duties. A member of the secret police who could not pass himself off for what he is not, would not be worth twenty francs a month in the way of salary. I have at different times disguised myself as a priest, as a dragoon, as an infantry officer, as a carpenter, a printer, and as a cocher de fiacre. I have waited at table in a restaurant as a garçon of the establishment; I have wheeled a truck with luggage on it, from the Chemin de Fer du Nord to the Grand Hôtel; I have smuggled cigars, passed myself off as a commissionaire, and assisted in taking tickets at a railway-station. In fact, there are few situations and fewer trades to which I have not for a time belonged, and to which I hope I have done a certain amount of honour."

"But," said I, "surely in a large town like Paris there must be somebody, and I should say not a few people, who know you, and who cannot be deceived by your different costumes?"

"Look here," replied my companion; "this is Thursday, we shall arrive in Paris

about seven o'clock this morning. If monsieur will make me a bet of a dinner for four persons at any restaurant the loser pleases, I will wager that before Sunday night I will speak on three separate occasions to monsieur, that he will not on either occasion recognise who I am until I disclose myself, and that each time I will speak to him for at least five minutes."

Thinking it impossible that any one person could by change of dress, or what not, deceive me as to his identity three times in four days, I at once agreed to make the bet. In due time we arrived at the station of the Chemin de Fer du Nord; I betaking myself to my hotel, and my companion to his own home.

After breakfast, I set off to present my credentials at the Rue de Jérusalem; which, as most people know, is the headquarters of the Paris police. Upon sending up my letter and card, I was shown to the room of the sous-chef de police correctionnelle; which, as I have mentioned before, is a totally distinct department from that of the political police. The gentleman into whose presence I was shown, had very little of the appearance which in England we perceive in our police inspectors. He was a well-dressed, clean-shaven man, of about fifty years of age, and looked more like the manager or head of a banking establishment, than as if he had anything to do with the detective police. He was seated at a large writing-table, upon which were a multitude of letters and other papers, duly docketed. Within reach he had three or four handles of electric-bells, and half-a-dozen elastic speaking-tubes, by which he could communicate in an instant with any part of the building. On one side of the room was a large glass door, beyond which I could perceive quite plainly some three or four sergents-de-ville were sitting, so that they could see all that passed in their chief's room, and be ready to come in at a moment's notice, although they could not hear what was said.

The sous-chef received me not only well but courteously. He heard my story, and without expressing an opinion as to whether I could carry out the views of my employers and recover the bonds, said he thought he knew the man who would suit me—"qui fera votre affaire." He then touched one of the bell-handles, and immediately afterwards spoke down one of the tubes to some person or persons in another part of the house. Having received a reply to his queries, he told me

that the man he wanted would be with us in a minute, and then commenced talking on indifferent subjects. In a very short time someone knocked at the door, and upon being told to come in there entered quite a young man, almost as well dressed as his superior, and who, if I had been asked the question, I should have put down as one of the ordinary flâneurs on the boulevards. The sous-chef introduced me to him, saying he was an individual well up in all the rascality—"escroquerie" was the word he used—of commercial Paris; and that if I would go with him and tell him my whole story he could no doubt help me, and, if it were possible to do so, would recover the bonds. He then shook me by the hand, wished me "bonne chance," said he would be glad to see me again, and hoped that I would be able to give a good account of the Paris police on my return to London. I then went forth with my new guide, thinking how utterly unlike both he and his chief were to anything I had seen in the way of police detectives in London.

My experience of Frenchmen, extending over many years, has taught me that if you really want one of them to help you, the first thing to do is to ask him to breakfast—to that meal which is eaten at eleven or twelve o'clock, and which bears a strong family likeness to an elaborate English luncheon. I accordingly asked the individual under whose care I had been put to come with me to breakfast at a certain restaurant in the Place du Havre, where, having a weakness for sole à la normande, one of the specialties of the house, I usually eat my midday meal when staying in the pleasantest of European capitals. My companion frankly accepted the proffered civility, and as we jogged thither in a fiacre I explained to him the nature of my business in Paris, and how anxious I was to recover the lost bonds for my friends, without letting it be publicly known that the latter had been robbed.

The detective said that he did not think there would be any great difficulty in the matter. He hoped, and indeed he believed, that, if the bonds had been pawned or pledged in Paris, he could find out without much difficulty where they were; that no respectable firm would take in pledged bonds from an individual whom they did not know; that those firms who did business of this sort no doubt would only advance a very small portion of the actual value; and that if I was prepared to

pay a little more than what had been advanced the bonds would no doubt be recovered. Thus talking we arrived at the Place du Havre, and both did full justice to the excellent breakfast placed before us. After coffee, cigars, and a chasse, we separated—my companion walking with me as far as the Grand Hôtel, where he took leave, promising to see me about five o'clock on the afternoon of the next day, at the hotel where I was lodging, the Bedford, in the Rue de l'Arcade. During our walk between the Place du Havre and the Grand Hôtel, I was anxious to see whether my companion was recognised by the several sergents-de-ville that we met on the road; but nothing of the kind took place. No one, whether of the police or not, appeared to have the slightest idea that this individual was anything more than one of the well-dressed loiterers, who may be counted by the thousand in Paris. He was well dressed, but not in any way dandified; and, from the crown of his hat to the sole of his boots, there was nothing whatever about him that spoke of his profession. If I had been asked to guess who he was, I should have said that he was a clerk in some merchant's office or bank; and that although not a wealthy, he was a tolerably prosperous and well-to-do man. His manners were good and free, without being presuming; he spoke to me as being quite my equal, and yet with nothing but what savoured of true French politeness. His willingness to help me was expressed more as if he were anxious to show kindness and civility to a foreigner, than as if he expected to be in any way rewarded for what he did. He never in any way so much as hinted at money or money's worth being needed to carry out his work; and when I spoke to him of the expenses he would incur in making this enquiry, and of my willingness to place funds in his hands for that purpose, his answer was, "Those are matters which you will arrange by-and-by with the chief; I am only acting under his orders."

After leaving the detective officer whose services were thus placed at my disposal, I walked back by the boulevards to the Madelaine, on my way to the Rue de l'Arcade. Happening to pass a linendraper's shop, and noticing in the window some socks which struck my fancy, I went in to look at them. Not being certain about the size, and whether or not they would fit me, the woman of the shop very civilly offered to send me round several pairs of

different sizes from which I could select. I gave her my address at the hotel, which was but a short distance off, and I had hardly arrived at the Bedford before one of the waiters tapped at my door, and announced that a man had brought me some socks to look at from a shop on the boulevards.

I desired that the man should be shown up. He brought his parcel in with him, and stood facing me as he undid it, talking about the weather, of the few strangers there were in Paris, and the usual gossip of a would-be civil Parisian shopman. I did not look at him very fixedly, but noticed that he was a man of about thirty years of age, with full black beard and moustache, black and somewhat long hair, and respectably, although not fashionably dressed. He showed me several pairs of socks, which I measured with some of my own from my portmanteau. I selected a dozen pairs, but demurred at the price he asked me, which was more than double what I should have had to pay in a most fashionable West End shop in London. We argued the point amicably together, and when I produced a hundred franc note wherewith to pay him, he said he had no change, but would go down to the bureau of the hotel and ask them for what he needed. I state these particulars, to show that the man was some time in my room, and that we had a considerable amount of conversation together. As he was turning to go out of the door, he all at once pulled off his wig, his beard, and whiskers, and stood revealed to me as my travelling companion from Dover to Paris. He grinned with delight, as having scored one in the three points he had to make to win his bet. For my own part I was so astonished that I could hardly speak. The disguise had been so perfect, and the manner in which he had followed me from the shop—into which a short half-hour before I had no idea of entering—was so astounding, that, as I told him at the time, he deserved to win the game from what he had already done. But this would not satisfy him. A Frenchman, no matter what his occupation may be, invariably takes pride in his work; and this detective was as proud of having outwitted me, as a general would be at having gained a great victory. He resumed his wig and beard, so as not to excite surprise in the people of the hotel, and going down with him to the bureau I procured change for my note, and paid him for the socks. The latter, it appeared, belonged

bona-fide to the shop where I had been. But how Monsieur X. had got possession of them, or why the woman of the shop had allowed him to bring them to my hotel, are mysteries I have never yet been able to solve.

The next morning, while I was still discussing an early breakfast, a visiting-card, on which was inscribed the name "Achille Dubras," was handed to me, with an intimation that the gentleman of that name wished to see me. Anxious as I was to obtain news of the lost property, and thinking that "Achille Dubras" might be the name I had not caught when introduced to the detective at the Rue de Jérusalem, I was not a little disappointed when my visitor was ushered into the room. He was an elderly man, with short cut, crisp hair, white drooping moustache, and a very pale face, and began a long rambling statement about being commis or clerk in a certain financial firm, to which firm, upon a day he named, some foreign bonds payable "to bearer," and worth two hundred and fifty thousand francs (ten thousand pounds) had been pledged as security for a loan of one twenty-fifth of their value. The principal facts of the man's statement were easy enough to understand, but what between his mumbling voice and his evident desire to conceal certain details, I could not exactly make out his story, and ended by asking him whether he would accompany me to the Rue de Jérusalem, and state there what he had told me.

"Avec le plus grand plaisir," replied he, in a familiar and altogether changed voice, and there, pulling off his wig and adjusting his moustache, sat revealed once more my travelling companion, Monsieur X. I had certainly been taken in, if possible more completely than the first time, and I again offered to pay my bet as fairly lost. This, however, my friend would not hear of, and said he must either win a third time, or else pay for the dinner he had lost. In the meantime, he must tell me that he had really been sent by the chef de bureau in the Rue de Jérusalem, to announce to me that a part, if not the whole, of the bonds had been discovered, and that they were in the hands of a very disreputable firm in Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth. "And now, mon ami," said the Frenchman, "all you have to do is to remain quiet for the present, not to move in the affair. In two or three days we hope to carry through your wishes. And as to our little bet, gar' à vous, monsieur!" With

this he gave my hand a shake and disappeared, chuckling to himself behind the thick white moustache, which he had resumed before going downstairs.

During the next two days, which I, nothing loath, employed in looking up my friends, visiting the theatre, and otherwise killing time, I regarded with suspicion every Frenchman who approached me; thinking to discover, in every strange face, the bright, twinkling eyes, and triumphant smile of my clever enemy. On the evening of the second day, I went to see a friend off from the Mazas station, and, strange to say that, although I had only at the eleventh hour made up my mind to accompany him, it was here I lost the third and last point in my bet with Monsieur X. As our fiacre drove up, one of the regular ticketed porters came forward to take my companion's trunk. In lifting it from the roof of the carriage he let it fall. Upon this, I spoke to him somewhat angrily; Frenchmanlike, he returned my abuse, and, for at least five minutes, we stood face to face, slanging each other in the choicest of French bad language. My friend, who was an Englishman, stood by, anxious to put in a word to help me, but not knowing exactly how to do so. All of a sudden, the porter put down the trunk, and asked me to speak to him in the street. Taking me under the gaslight, and looking cautiously round, he pulled off his cap and a curious sort of skin mask which covered the forehead, nose, and upper part of the face, fitting close like a glove, and there stood Monsieur X.

I at once declared that I had fairly lost the bet, and invited him and any two friends he liked to bring, to dine with me next day at my favourite restaurant in the Place du Havre. We then returned together to the more central part of Paris, my companion having in the meantime changed his clothes at the house of a friend in the neighbourhood.

The history of the finding of the bonds is soon told. In three or four days after my arrival in Paris, the police had the whole affair at their fingers' ends. It was just as they suspected. The securities had been pledged to a very low money-lending firm, for something under five hundred pounds; they being worth twenty times that amount. A little—or I should say, not a little—pressure was put upon these Shylocks, who, for a premium of two thousand francs (eighty pounds), were made to disgorge what may truly be called their

plunder. They manage these things, if not better, at any rate more promptly, in France than in England. The Paris police gave the holders of the bonds the choice of restoring them to me, or of appearing before the juge d'instruction. Both individually and collectively, this firm could not be said to have a clean bill of health. It was not the first, nor yet the second, or third time, that they had been mixed up with money affairs, which, to say the least of it, were excessively shady. They consented at once to give up what they were told was stolen property. The result was that within ten days of my leaving London, I returned there, having fulfilled my mission; my expenses being all paid, and a cheque for a hundred guineas handed to me as a remuneration for my trouble.

DRAMATIC DOCTORS.

So much has been said and written touching the Decline of the Drama, that it may be worth while to investigate for a moment the meaning of a phrase cunningly conceived with regard to alliteration. Mr. Dion Boucicault, in his letter to Mr. Charles Reade, published in the *North American Review*, assumes that the so-called decline of the drama has an actual existence; that plays can no longer be produced on the grand old lines; that actors systematically degrade the author's work and debauch the minds of the spectators; that in fact we are, dramatically speaking, in a very bad way. I think I have heard something like this before. There is a ring about it as of the cry of the cuckoo. Surely when I was very young—so young that London Assurance, with Mrs. Nisbett playing Lady Gay Spanker, was the occasion of my first appearance at any theatre—I heard groans about the state of the drama. It was even then in the condition of the royal navy as described by Marryat—full of dismal old sea-dogs, whose howl was that the service was "going to the dogs, sir!" Since the date referred to—that is to say, during nearly the whole of my natural life—I have heard of the decline of the drama. The phrase has been dinned into my ears so often that I almost marvel I did not accept it on trust, as busy men take many of their opinions. Perhaps I should have done so but for the constant contradiction afforded by the evidence of my own eyes and ears, and the recollection that the same thing has been said of

the drama, and indeed of almost all human institutions, since the world began. It is never the present that is praised, but always the past. Homer, who lived at some not-well-ascertained but surely remote period, bewails the degeneracy of the men of his time, and extols at their expense the exploits of the heroes and demi-gods who move in the mighty stride of his hexameters. There is in his works a refrain of reproach, as it were, against the men of "these degenerate days!" and from his day until now, the eternal clap-trap about doing things more *majorum* has endured. Even Cains Julius descended to speak of his tenth legion as being "not forgetful of its ancient valour," thereby proving himself a laudator temporis acti of the genuine breed. Among modern nations, since life has been made endurable by steam and other devices, there has been no end to the weeping and wailing over the weakness and degeneracy of the age. Our respectable forefathers were, we have been told, wiser and stronger than we are, our respectable grandmothers more modest and dignified than our wives and daughters. In addition to the decay of man just cited, I may quote other matters concerning which it is customary to exalt the past. There is the good old-fashioned servant, for instance. When did he or she live, and do, and suffer? In the comedies which Terence translated or adapted ("adaptation," you see, is not a degenerate usage peculiar to these times); from Menander I find Davus a flippant rascal enough—not one of the genuine good old-fashioned servants by any means. From Roman days I take a flight to the Elizabethan age, and find the drama of that time full of complaints of the then actually extant servant, and praise of the good old-fashioned domestic of the preceding generation. This eternal theme can be traced in the French comedy of Molière; in the English comedies of the Restoration period, in the writings of the Queen Anne men, of those of the age of Johnson, in the chit-chat of our own day. When then did the good servant exist, except in kindly but blurred remembrance?

In like fashion I hear that the English racehorse is in a bad way, and that being bred for speed alone he cannot stay over a distance of ground; that, in short, he has degenerated into a weedy screw, good for nothing but sprint handicaps. This view has been so persistently taken by a writer who, I am bound to admit, does know a horse when he sees it, that it is quite worth

answering at length, but not in this place, where I will content myself with observing that the degeneracy of the English racehorse has been a fruitful topic for talkers and writers ever since the Godolphin and Darley Arabians were allowed—as certain fastidious carpers then thought—to corrupt the blood of the native racer. As ancient methods of timing races can hardly be relied upon, it will also suffice to remark that any racehorse can "stay for a month" if the pace be only slow enough; and that if there be any truth in good looks, in length and size, and symmetry, the racehorse of the last century, as depicted in portraits in oil, in engravings on silver vases and other decorative objects of a sporting kind, was a very third-rate, hack-like animal as compared with his descendant of to-day.

The drama has also, I am told, declined; and I venture to ask since when? Once for all I must protest against comparisons of the present instant of time with the past, as a whole. Nothing can be more grossly unfair. As in physical so in mental development—it is always the cue of the depreciator to exalt the past at the expense of the present, unless he attempt the bolder tactics of Tacitus, and depreciate his own countrymen by extolling the merits of the foreigner. The latter method, however, is dangerous, except in very strong hands, while the praise of the past is always safe. Now the past is a capacious and elastic period, and may be made to mean as much or as little as may be wished for any particular purpose. It is perpetually being overlooked that the events of the past—as has been well said, are like an avenue of great trees which, seen from one end, appear close together. Thus in dramatic history we talk glibly of *Æschylus* and Menander, of Shakespeare and Molière, of Sheridan and of Victor Hugo; forgetting that it took the human race, even according to accepted chronology, thousands of years to produce the Greek drama; that after the fall of the Roman empire, a thousand years elapsed before anything worth preserving was written in a dramatic form; and that it has taken three hundred years to produce the great triumphs of the English drama. And of these how many keep the stage? Saving the better-known plays of Shakespeare, the Elizabethan drama has been, except by a few enthusiastic students, forgotten. Again, of the plays written between the death of Shakespeare and the

appearance of *She Stoops to Conquer*, how many survive? Not six. Of those written between the appearance of *The School for Scandal* and that of *Money*, how many are known even by name? What has become of the *West Indian*, *Inkle and Yarico*, and other dramas which made a noise in their time? They have vanished, as they deserved to do, into utter night. As a plain truth, great dramatic works have only been produced at considerable intervals of time. The giant trees still stand in the stately avenue, the lowly brushwood is cut down and carted away from year to year.

To be just to Mr. Boucicault, he does not try to overwhelm us with the record of centuries. He says simply that the drama has declined "during our time," and then goes on to state that "our time" signifies the last half-century—which would place the commencement of the period of decadence in the year 1827. He then, with a grand recklessness of statement, asserts that "it is comforting to reflect that the fine arts, together with every form of literature—in truth, all the staple products of the brain—have suffered a decline during the last half-century." Mr. Boucicault lives so much in the theatre that he may be pardoned for utter ignorance of every other subject; but, waiving for a moment the dramatic question, must not a man be beside himself to talk of the decline of the fine arts since 1827?

It would not be difficult to show that, in almost every department of the fine arts, the advance during the last half-century has been extraordinary. New English schools of painting have been created, have died away, and been succeeded by others; an English school of etching has been formed, and architecture has sprung into a new and healthy life. It is ridiculous to compare the English fine art of fifty years ago with that of to-day, but we must allow Mr. Boucicault a little space and law when he travels beyond that peculiar form of art to which he has devoted his busy existence. Let us confine ourselves to Mr. Boucicault's own special subject. Let us look at the state of the English drama in 1827, the date from which the assumed decline took place. In the season of 1826-27 the performances at Drury-lane Theatre included *The Wonder*, with Wallack and Miss Ellen Tree; *The Knight of the Cross*; *The Rivals*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *The Belle's Stratagem*; *The*

Heir-at-Law; *Pizarro*; *The School for Scandal*; *Der Freischütz*; *Douglas*; *Cymbeline*; *Amphitryon*, and many more stock pieces. Of the new pieces produced at Drury-lane were *The Two Houses of Granada*, a poor piece called *A Trip to Wales*; *White Lies*; *The Lottery Ticket*; *The Murdered Guest*—played only twice; *My Best Friend*; *Englishman in India*; *The Trial of Love*; *X Y Z*; *Comfortable Lodgings*; *The Two Make a Pair*; *The Bo of Santillana*; *Fast and Slow*; and *The Turkish Lovers*. Here is evidence of industry of a certain kind, but throughout the season was produced only one piece that has ever been heard of by the present generation—to wit, *The Lottery Ticket*. At Covent-garden were produced *The Green Room*, with Farren and C. Kemble; a version of *Peveril of the Peak*; *Returned Killed*—a free translation from the French; *Miss Mitford's Foscari*; *The White Maid*—taken from a French opera; *The School for Grown Children*; *The Oracle*; *The Wife's Stratagem*; *Love and Reason*; all of which are absolutely forgotten. At the Hay-market there were given, *The Rencontre*, or *Love will have its own Way*; *Gudgeons and Sharks*; *You must be Buried*; *The Goldsmith*; *Spring and Autumn*, alternated with *Paul Pry*; *The Rivals*; *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*; and other stock-pieces.

It must be admitted that both old and new pieces were, so far as can be ascertained, admirably acted. Among the celebrities at the three houses just mentioned were, in this one season of 1826-27, Wallack, Miss Ellen Tree, Miss A. Tree, Cooper, Downton, C. Kemble, Harley, Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Orger, Farren, Miss Kelly, Miss Stephens, Kean, Liston, Bartley, Mrs. Glover, Blanchard, Madame Vestris, Young, Keeley, Serle, Miss Foote, John Reeve, Vining, and Mrs. Humby. It must not be supposed that all these admirable artists were just at that one moment at the zenith of their reputation, but there was here an almost unexampled opportunity to cast pieces well. Probably the skilled actors and actresses owed their education to the fashion of reviving old pieces; but, be the cause what it may, there was in 1826-27 plenty of histrionic talent in London.

Stepping one year over Mr. Boucicault's line, we will see what the dramatist of the day succeeded in doing with his materials. In 1827-28 appeared at the three chief London theatres *The Illustrious Stranger*;

The Gambler's Fate; The Wealthy Widow; Forgetand Forgive; Isidore di Merida; The Lancers; Edward the Black Prince; Haunted Inn; Ivan's Early Days; Don Pedro—with Macready as Don Henry; The Dumb Savoyard; Gay Deceivers; Ups and Downs; The Seraglio; Serf; Merchant's Wedding; Somnambulist; Invincibles; Tuckitomba; Little Offerings; Daughter to Marry; Milliners; Two Friends; Green-Eyed Monster; Barber Baron; Management, &c.; all of which are engulfed in night. So far as actors and actresses went, this period was favourable to the drama; but the pieces appear to have been very inferior to those of the present day—at least in the estimation of the public, for they were constantly withdrawn after the second or third night's representation. Now this test is one against which Mr. Boucicault could, would, or should be the last man to appeal. It is no answer to plead that the runs of former years were not as those of to-day, for successful plays did run for ten or fourteen nights. The fact is simply that the great majority of the pieces produced at that time, as at any other time, either depended upon some passing interest, or were entirely devoid of merit. As we pass into Mr. Boucicault's half-century of decline, we fail to see that the pieces were much worse than in the previous ten years, and it is unquestionable that several pieces were produced which keep the stage to this day. The plays of the late Lord Lytton and of Sheridan Knowles have their defects no doubt. They are artificial in the extreme, but yet audiences can be found for *The Hunchback*; for *The Lady of Lyons*, and for *Money*. These three plays, maugre their detractors, may fairly, as acting plays, challenge comparison with anything produced between 1800 and 1825, when, we are told, the drama was in an extraordinarily healthy condition. The half-century of decline alluded to by Mr. Boucicault must have been intended by him to date from the year 1840; when, as Mr. Charles Reade has shown, the influence of the French school became paramount, and first, translation, and then "adaptation," saved English dramatists the agony of invention. It is also noteworthy, that Mr. Boucicault himself appeared at that juncture with *London Assurance*, a strange patchwork of old scenes and old characters, utterly wooden and soulless. It must in fairness to Mr. Boucicault be admitted, that he is hardly the author of *London Assurance*. Such as it is, the play was

drawn over his lines by the actors. Being a young man, and then very docile and lamblike, Mr. Boucicault permitted the very strong cast of *London Assurance* to rewrite whole scenes, to cut others out completely, and finally, so to transmogrify it, that if he had not personally assisted in the work of remodelling, he would not have known his own play. Actors are very proud of this pretty piece of work, and point triumphantly to *London Assurance* as the "actor's play," par excellence. Its first triumph, and its subsequent weakness, arise from the character of Lady Gay Spanker, obviously modelled from Constance in *The Love Chase*. Mrs. Nisbett could play this entirely impossible character without making it either ridiculous or vulgar—a feat that no subsequent actress has been able to perform. Probably Mr. Boucicault still believes *London Assurance* to be an English comedy, but if he dates the decadence of the drama from the time he became a dramatist, whom should he blame but himself? He has chosen to invent a mysterious Irish drama, made of squireens, shebeens, caubeens, and dhudeens, unlikely priests, and impossible peasants, the whole flavoured with the aroma of whisky-punch. This strange farrago, aided by stage-carpentry, has had the power of attracting Irish audiences, both in England, and in the United States, and must thus, we suppose, be admitted to have merit of some kind, if one could only discover it. Of a truth, it is poor stuff, this Irish drama, but Mr. Boucicault will pardon us for asserting that, weak as it is, it is quite as good as *Paul Pry*, for instance, and vastly more amusing than *Inkle and Yarico*. These two last-named productions were immense favourites with our grandfathers, for reasons which are not apparent on the surface. Nothing can be imagined more ghastly than these once popular pieces, nor can the present writer see the merit of *The Heir-at-Law*, and other plays of the same school. Everything written at all in the same key as Sheridan's comedies is so immeasurably below them, as to prove merely wearisome. It is of course an invidious task to select the works of living writers for especial praise, but surely *The Ticket of Leave Man*, to take an instance almost at random, is as far above the average sentimental drama of fifty years ago, as *Money* is above *The West Indian*.

Can Mr. Boucicault ignore the fact that the revolt of the French romanticists has taken place within half-a-century, and that if English playwrights since 1840 are indebted to France for their leading ideas, they have at least translated, adapted, and stolen the thoughts of the best dramatic school in existence? It is the very wealth of dramatic invention on one side of the Channel which accounts for its absence from the other. Our playwrights are supplied with an inexhaustible stream of new ideas, or old ideas beautifully reset, and neatly polished, by their French masters; and it is hardly to be wondered at, that English managers prefer to produce a play which has been already performed successfully in Paris, to running the risk of an entirely new and original drama. Instead of assigning the so-called decline of the drama, as Mr. Boucicault does, to the absorption of such literary faculty as exists in this country by the newspaper press, it might easily be shown that novel-writing has deflected many from the laborious task of writing for the stage. This doctrine, however, would not, of course, chime in with Mr. Boucicault's position that "the fine arts, together with every form of literature—in truth, all the staple products of the brain—have suffered a decline during the last half-century;" and again that "as the newspaper press has prospered, so in proportion have the poet, the novelist, and the dramatist disappeared." To all conversant in any way with English literature, this statement must appear little short of astounding. Granting that we have no living poet equal to Byron, it is sheer madness to compare the prose fiction of the early years of this century with that of the last fifty years, including as they do all the work of Macaulay, Bulwer, Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and a host of other writers, of nearly, if not quite, the first order of merit. Against all these Mr. Boucicault can array but a single name, that of Scott. And yet we must be told that art has been blighted by the baleful influence of the newspaper press. All this is mere assertion unsupported by a tittle of evidence. As a matter of fact, all this outcry of decline has no cause whatever, except the desire of Mr. Dion Boucicault to let off a jeremiad, which should cover the very moderate results of his own connection with the drama.

Mr. Boucicault would do well to remember that the author of that fine work, *Formosa*, is not the only dramatist whose work finds acceptance at the hands of the British public.

Playgoers, it may safely be asserted, are infinitely better catered for than they were fifty years ago. At two theatres, at least, in London, I have recently seen plays as well acted almost as could be wished, and certainly far better put on the stage than was dreamed of in the year 1827. At many other houses the entertainments provided were good, bad, and indifferent, but far better than any second-class work of fifty years ago. If great difficulty is experienced in inducing the public to listen to the more serious drama, and to sit patiently through a delineation of the more lofty passions, it is because the old-fashioned stagy school does not reflect the present time. Fifty years ago *Mercutio* still lived, and *Jack Falstaff*, in a frogged surtout and dyed whiskers, saw him through his quarrel with *Tybalt*, and got drunk with him afterwards. Young *Dornton* was a genuine specimen of the "buck" species. Since then men have lost their faith in the bright, gay, impulsive youth, who atones, like *Charles Surface*, for the faults of his head by the soundness of his heart. They know *Goldfinch*, for the creature may be seen at Newmarket each day of every meeting; but where is *Lord Ogleby*, and where is the rich uncle who comes home from India, laden with the fruit of the pagoda-tree, and says "Take her, you dog?" These types are gone, and in their place we have a self-contained race of beings as desperately wicked, perhaps, as their forefathers; but not so drunken and so noisy over their vices. It is a calm, unimpressible generation. The pit would never dream of "rising at" an actor now. And it is this cool, quiet, affectedly sub-acid race of beings which forms the material for the modern dramatist. His task is difficult; but Mr. Boucicault has rather assumed, than proved, that he does not execute it well.

The "decline of the drama" might be called, in fact, simply an invention of Mr. Boucicault (if he have not rather "adapted" his views from those of Mr. Charles Reade)—only, unfortunately, the same cry has been raised again and again, ever since there was any drama to disparage. Try and improve the stage,

Mr. Boucicault, if you can, but in the name of all that is conventional, let us have no more idle prating about the "good old times!"

THE WRONG UMBRELLA.

It is lamentable that the moral sense of mankind takes so little account of the rights of property as regards books and umbrellas. Many people who are in most respects excellent members of society will borrow books without stint, and if they do not return them minus the covers, will keep them without compunction, and when you hint that they have had them rather long, will mutter, "Confound the fellow! does he think I want to steal his books?" I have had differences with my best friends on this score, and have even been asked whether I had not better fine everybody who retained my valuable volumes beyond a fixed time, as if I were a village library. Such insults have been borne with meekness, because I have always remembered with remorse how I once revelled in the thought of having made away with Johnson's umbrella. The laxity of the public morals in the matter of umbrellas is truly awful, but retribution will sometimes overtake him who plots against his neighbour's parachute. Let me tell how it overtook me.

A long time ago I was madly enamoured of Mary Jane Bowles. Mary Jane was what you would call a pocket Venus, and often have I been tempted to tuck her under my arm, like a packet of sugar, and fly to the nearest desert island. She was an artless girl, and very fond of society—especially the society of young men with whom I was not on terms of ardent friendship. I did not blame her for this, and when she invited me to tea and I found that Johnson had also been invited, my discerning eye observed that this was not coquetry, but pure exuberance of spirits. Mr. Bowles, I noticed, was of the same opinion, and it was a great satisfaction to me to have my judgment confirmed by so experienced a parent. Mrs. Bowles, had she been alive, would no doubt have agreed with us.

I had known Mary Jane since she wore short frocks. Johnson had known her about a month. It was pleasant to hear her call me Sam and him Mr. Johnson, but somehow the familiarity in my case seemed to have bred, not contempt—oh

dear no! nothing of that kind—but, a sort of nonchalance of manner. (How useful the French language is when one wants to express a very delicate shade of meaning!) But that was her artlessness.

"Dear me, Sam," she observed at the tea-table, "what have you got such a long face for?" Johnson's attentions had made me a little pensive.

"Something must be long to make up for the prevailing shortness," I said.

Johnson was not much taller than Mary Jane. I made a note of that sarcasm afterwards. My impromptus are too often lost.

"Don't be impertinent, sir. Look into that spoon. Your face is exactly like the reflection you see there, isn't it, Mr. Johnson?"

He grinned. It was then I observed for the first time the singular breadth of his visage. His grin seemed to extend across the room.

"If Mr. Johnson will hold the spoon horizontally he may admire his own image," I remarked playfully.

Johnson grinned again. He was one of those insanely good-humoured men whom it is quite impossible to annoy.

"Sam, you are outrageous," said Mary Jane. "Mr. Johnson and I are going to practise our duet. You stop here and talk to Pa!"

Mr. Bowles had to be aroused from the doze into which he usually dropped after tea. It was in that habit that my penetration had detected his conviction that Mary Jane was an artless creature.

Pa woke up and asked me what were my views on tramways. His composition was a fine crusty conservatism, and he disliked innovations. His port-wine was fine and crusty too; but that is by the way.

I was listening to the duet overhead, and had a very indistinct idea of what the old gentleman said, and of what I was saying myself. I cannot sing, but it was not for that reason that I objected to the preposterously operative way in which Johnson was conducting himself.

"Tramways, my dear sir, are, as you so justly observe, the chief scourge of mankind. From the earliest times they have been noted for their hostility to human virtue, and——"

I have lands and proud dwellings,
And all shall be thine,

sang Johnson, upstairs.

"And it is, as you say, monstrous that landed proprietors and bloated house-

holders should override the popular protest in this matter, especially as we know that—that for purposes of drainage tramways are——”

“My dear boy, you are not well,” interrupted Mr. Bowles, kindly. “Have a glass of wine.”

When I left the house that evening I was thoughtful. It struck me that Johnson had Mary Jane in his mind’s eye. I could not damage that organ of vision, so I decided that nothing would be gained by hitting him. But something would have to be done. I wanted to marry Mary Jane. She was a charming girl, and her father had a little money.

My suspicions about Johnson were confirmed next day. I met a lively friend, who said :

“Oh, you know Johnson ?”

“Well ?”

“He’s going in for the little Bowles. Told me he should propose to-morrow night when he takes her home from Twig’s party.”

“Perdition !”

“Eh ? Slap-up girl, isn’t she ? Thought you were sweet that way ?”

“Perd—— ! Oh no, not at all ! There’s my omnibus. By-bye !”

Going to propose when he took her home from Twig’s ! By all the powers he should not take her home from Twig’s !

It had been agreed that I should escort Mary Jane to the halls of Twig. It was a fine night apparently, but I took my umbrella. It was a new one, surmounted by an alligator’s head in German silver. Fervently I invoked Jupiter Pluvius to befriend me, and hoped that Johnson would leave his umbrella at home.

It was less than ten minutes’ walk, but there was time enough to show a little preliminary tenderness, if not to put the grand question itself. With an artless girl like Mary Jane it was best to approach such a subject by degrees.

“’Twas just such a night as this,” I said softly, “when you and I, Mary Jane, trod the grassy turf beside that murmuring brook——”

“Oh, I remember !” she exclaimed, laughing in her guileless way. “I know what you are going to say. That was the time you fell over the stile, running away from the bull. And your nose was done up in sticking-plaster, you know ; and you scratched my face with it, sir !”

I had forgotten that circumstance ; but what did it matter ?

“Yes, Mary Jane,” I said, passionately. “And why did my nose scratch your face ? Because my lips were seeking that paradise which now——”

“Good evening, Miss Bowles.” It was Johnson. I saw his grin in the moonlight, and—confusion !—he had brought his umbrella.

There was a little dancing at Twig’s, but I had no pleasure in it. My mind was full of Johnson’s umbrella. It came before my diseased vision like Macbeth’s dagger. I clutched at it, and I had it not.

Time wore on. I stood at the window alone, and looked out at the weather. Heavy clouds obscured the moon. Heavy drops began to fall. Then the temptation had me in its grip.

“His umbrella !” I gasped. “I—I’ll hide it.”

“It’s going to be a nasty night, after all,” said a hated voice at my elbow. “I believe only you and I have brought umbrellas. There’ll be an awful scrimmage for cabs. Luckily we haven’t far to walk.”

He was grinning more than ever, but he could not have heard me. A cab would not suit him, of course ! He wanted to walk home with Mary Jane, slowly—very slowly, so that——frenzy ! I would do the deed. I would throw his umbrella——

“Oh, Sam, do take me down to refreshments. I asked Mr. Johnson, but he has forgotten me.”

She looked up into my face so bewitchingly that my heart thumped as if it were a door-knocker in the grasp of a demon postman. He knew she was thirsting for claret-cup, and yet he left her. Careless brute ! What a husband he would make ! Whereas in me—in me—she would find——

“Mary Jane,” I whispered as we left the giddy crowd that stood around the liquids, “Mary Jane, may I see you home ?”

“If you are a good boy, perhaps you may. But here’s Mr. Johnson, and I owe him a dance.”

He took her away, but she looked back at me with a smile. I really never saw such an artless girl in my life.

And now, to make assurance doubly sure, I crept upstairs to the room where the umbrellas had been left. The gas was out and the window open. The melancholy voices of divers cats seemed to protest against the crime, but my nerves were firm. I could see nothing. No matter ; I knew where my enemy had put his

umbrella. I groped for it. I grasped it by the ferruled end. Just then a footstep startled me. I rushed to the window, and dropped the hateful thing into the black abyss below. There was a splash. I felt a sardonic joy. He had brought his umbrella for fear of rain. Well, it might do its duty in the waterbutt!

I listened. All was quiet. The next room was in darkness. There could be no one there. I went down to the refreshment-room, drank a glass of wine, chatted awhile with Mrs. Twig, and recovered my self-possession. Then I sought Mary Jane. Johnson had just crossed the room to her when I entered. Suddenly she was seized with a violent fit of coughing. I ran for a glass of water. When I returned the coughing became worse than ever. Yet that unfeeling monster, Johnson, grinned till I thought the corners of his mouth would meet in the nape of his neck.

When I asked if she felt better Mary Jane went off again; and presently the cough was so bad that she had to leave the room. I remarked to Johnson that she must have caught cold; and then he coughed. No doubt she had been out on the balcony with him to see whether the rain had ceased. But wait a little, my grinning friend!

Everybody was now going away. With a fiendish delight I saw Johnson walk upstairs to get his hat and coat and his—Ha! ha! I waited till he came down. He was perfectly cool, and—did my eyes mock me?—he had in his hand an umbrella! I could not see the handle, but of course it was mine. The fellow's impudence staggered me. I tore up into the room above. There was no umbrella there. *It was mine!*

I went down, resolved to make an example of Johnson. He stood in the hall, leisurely putting on his gloves.

"Excuse me," I said calmly, "but you have got my umbrella."

"I think not," he replied, with his everlasting grin.

"But you have, sir! There can be no mistake about it. Pray is your umbrella-handle an alligator's head in Germ—in solid silver?"

"I think not," said Johnson, coolly. He held up the umbrella. *It was not mine!*

"I am quite ready, Sam. What's the matter? You can't find your umbrella? Oh dear! And Mrs. Twig says she has lent every umbrella she has. Are you

sure you brought it? Oh, thank you, Mr. Johnson. Good-night, Sam; Mr. Johnson will see me home. It isn't raining much, and you won't get wet if you run all the way."

I don't know whether I got wet or not. For that matter, I don't know how I got home. I believe the Twigs thought I had been drinking too much. Perhaps I had, or how could I have thrown the wrong umbrella out of the window? It was found some weeks later, and when it was brought to me in a pulpy condition by young Twig, who is the smallest of wags, he suggested that I should adopt a waterbutt and umbrella as a crest. Johnson did propose to "the little Bowles" during that walk home. They are married now. That umbrella business remains a mystery, but I am still convinced of the artlessness of Mary Jane.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VII. NOËMI'S LOVER.

IN the new city to which she had been carried by her master, life still went on in its former grooves. At least nearly so, for the days can never quite repeat themselves. Outwardly they were the same; but Noëmi felt herself fired with an altogether new enthusiasm.

What an utterly glorious thing Art must be, if it was worth more than five thousand francs a night for a whole season!

She had sold her life to some purpose indeed. She studied song and finance hand in hand, and her wits quickened. She had already shown considerable aptitude for at least one of them—finance—in her interview with Prosper; and, though a girl who had never possessed so much as ten lire in her life, had been more than able to hold her own. To her master she showed the other; no wonder that he feared being robbed of such a gold mine.

Such she felt herself; she herself was the Cortez of her own Mexico. The dream of her life felt less like a dream, now that it had obtained a value that could be stated in francs and weeks. She began to understand why a man should have picked up a stray girl on the Roman Corso, carry her off from her own people, hide

her like a secret treasure, and devote his whole life to her culture. Of course he was right to keep off such trespassers as Prosper, and she made up her mind to ask at least ten thousand francs on the next occasion. Meanwhile, she sang and studied with all her might, as if aiming at twenty thousand. She was stupid enough in hundreds of ways, and more than ignorant enough in thousands; but she had one piece of absolute wisdom, and that the very rarest in all the world—she knew what she wanted. And she knew how to get it—at least she thought so.

Had she been brought up like any other young woman, rich or poor, in any other country, her life must have been utterly unendurable; as hard and as empty as Celia's, before exile to life and Lindenheim. Noëmi had not even the weekly companionship of a Deepweald Dorcas meeting. But she was not yet satiated with the common comforts of life—luxuries they were; after her manner of life in the Ghetto. It was enough to have enough, without wanting more; and she had aims and ambitions enough to keep her from lonesomeness. She had never known the love of man, woman, child, dog, or cat, nor dreamed of such a thing; so she could no more miss it than any soulless creature can feel the want of a soul. That people did fall in love she knew; though not so well as if she had been brought up in the Corso instead of the Ghetto, where love affairs were carried on with oriental arrangement rather than with Roman freedom. There was a great deal of love in her songs, but she drew but little of that learning out of them—*Io t'amo*, their eternal burden, meant ten thousand francs a week; perhaps twenty thousand. What would she do with them when she got them? That she never thought about; people would rest content enough with what they have, if they ever asked themselves why they wanted more. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof—or might be, if we made it so, even when it rains. At any rate, to-day's rain is better than to-morrow's sun.

If she could have performed the double feat of reading herself and then translating herself into words—of which she was incapable as a philosopher—she would have answered, "I want to buy the whole Carnival; joy to make up for misery, freedom for slavery, wealth for poverty, luxury for starvation, laziness for labour, everything for nothing, but

joy above all; to hold in my very hands the whole vision that came to me on the Corso—diamonds, horses, flowers, fine clothes, homage, but above all, diamonds; to bathe my soul in them and enjoy them all." It was real genius in its way; it is not everyone, man or woman, who is born with such a sublime appetite for joy, so ingrained and so intense as to be proof against a girlhood spent in ignorance of its very name, among sights, sounds, and scents that exclude a whisper of it from her, until at last it had come to her in one blaze of glory, and fired up with lightning all the sleeping soul that had been born in her. Without genius for joy, the soul that had only slept in her must have died years ago at the hands of *La Purgatoria*.

This eager soul of hers was inspiring and making possible for her the stiffest passage in an especially stiff exercise, when her master, sitting at the piano, stopped suddenly.

"What have I done wrong?" she asked. Much experience of his ways had established a sort of sympathy between them—so much so, that an entire lesson was often carried on without half-a-dozen words.

"Nothing." And then she saw, for the first time, that the whole attention of her master was not concentrated upon the lesson.

There were reasons, and to spare, why it should wander. It was a very hot day, and the city was all asleep under a blue sky, while these two were toiling on for to-morrow's sake, and letting the present gold and blue float by like a worthless dream. A dim scent of summer, without more definite perfume, found its way through the green persiennes into the artificial twilight of the half-empty room, in the middle of which stood the piano on a polished floor. More than once, Noëmi has been spoken of as under a sense of enchantment. It was not that she was imaginative, but on hot noons and under starlight summer nights, south of the Alps or Pyrenees, nobody needs enchantment to feel at times under a spell. Just now, it was the spell of half-sleep. When the piano ceased suddenly, the melody was taken up by the splash of a fountain in the courtyard, which played dream music to perfection.

The master, as he sat with his fingertips poised motionless on the keys, looked like a man in a dream, and his drowsy look was infectious. Noëmi, always in-

clined to bodily laziness, and a splendid sleeper, leaned her elbows on the piano and let her eyes close languidly. Neither of the two looked at the other; but the presence of beauty must needs have its contagion as well as that of sleep, and the master must have been stone-blind or without a pulse if he had failed to notice that the girl, to whom of late he had been devoting all his days, had been growing very beautiful. When there was nobody to see her out of a looking-glass but the rats and spiders in the loft of bric-à-brac, she had promised to turn beautiful; and she was keeping her promise faithfully. Plenty to eat, plenty of sleep, plenty of good air were doing their work well.

The contrast between them, if only on this score, was glaring; and by no means so redeemingly picturesque as under the stars of the Corso. The full-bodied, robust womanhood of Noëmi, coming upon her girlhood with the suddenness of countries that have no twilight, was a lamentable foil for the quaint, hard ugliness of the Englishman, who neither in stature nor in face had a single point in his favour. She was to him more than Venus to Vulcan, and as a grown woman to a dwarf, into the bargain. And, worst of all, in spite of his exceptional plainness, there was a fatal air of commonplaceness about him altogether—at least till one began to feel the strength that belongs inherently to absolute singleness and simplicity.

Of course he had fallen in love with his pupil. At any rate she did not know it; and, ignorant as she may be about all things, love and all, she could hardly have failed to find it out if her voice had given him one human thrill apart from its accidental music, or her fingers had set fire to one fibre in him when he happened to touch them. Probably flame knows when it burns.

"Noëmi, I am going to marry you," said he. "And now, go on."

But Noëmi did not go on. She only took her elbows from the piano, stood up, and from her height stared down at the top of the head of her master, where, young as he was, the hairs were already thinner than they should have been.

"Well?" he said impatiently.

"You said——"

"I said, go on."

"No, but you are going to marry me. And La Purgatoria married Il Purgatorio," she said, in a grave tone that meant volumes.

"I must marry you," said her master. "There's no help for it. I saw Prosper in the town to-day. Luckily he didn't see me, so I wasted no time."

He was not speaking in the least like a lover; indeed, so far as his deep voice was capable of inflection, it implied a rather unpleasant but absolute necessity. To any other than Noëmi it would have sounded like, "I must have this tooth out, whatever the pain may be."

Some instinct came to her and told her that this was not even how Il Purgatorio, in far-forgotten days, had asked a woman to be La Purgatoria. Indeed she knew, beyond instinct or guesswork, that Manasse, the young old-clothes' merchant in the next street to theirs, had, as a fact, asked old Giacobbe's Rebecca in a strikingly different way, for all that business arrangements were as satisfactory as could be devised. There is a flavour of romance about even a kiss in the Ghetto.

"Why must you marry me?" asked Noëmi, doubtfully.

"Because I must keep you."

"From Prosper?"

"From the whole swarm of Prosper's."

"You mean they would give me too little money?"

"Too little? They would give you too little if they gave you all the gold in the world. And, yes, they might tempt even you," he said gloomily.

"Not if they gave me too little," said Noëmi, with decision.

Her master struck an angry chord. "The place shall be sacred from the name of money where I am," he said loftily. "You sing for Art, Noëmi; understand that once for all. That is why I brought you from the Corso. And I mean to keep you for Art; I have a right to you. And the only way I can see is to marry you."

There was a long mirror between the windows with their green persiennes. Before Noëmi had seen the world, it will be remembered, she had seen herself, and had played fantastic tricks before a looking-glass for her own solitary benefit, and as a relief from cracking nuts in purgatory. Her eyes turned to the mirror now; there was light enough in the darkened room for her to see herself by. And it would not have been ignorance of the world merely, but downright idiotcy, if she had not been inspired by what she saw there with the question, "Is that why you asked me to come with you?" There was a soft note in her voice, softer than when she

sang, as if the woman's love of love, which men in their vanity so often mistake for love of them, had just begun to whisper, "I am here."

"That—what?" asked her master. "To keep you? You don't suppose I meant to train you for Prosper? You are everything that I wanted, Noëmi. You are more than I ever dreamed of finding. There was destiny in my finding you, and in your having been kept apart from me. You have a voice such as one does not find once in a thousand years. You are a splendid instrument, that can be tuned as well and as truly as if you had been made of wood and wire."

She looked at herself in the mirror again, and did not feel that "wood and wire" was the most accurate description that could possibly be given of her, or that, if it had been, such a composition would have been a reason for wanting to marry her. But everyone to his taste; and it was barely possible to imagine that common flesh and blood would have had their commonplace attraction for this grim young man. During all their intercourse, with her voice in his ears daily and her womanhood growing constantly before his eyes, he had never so much as touched her with the tips of his fingers except by accident, and then, as it seemed, merely as if she had been the piano-case, which one must touch now and then if one uses the keys often. But yet—but yet, she felt after all, a man does not ask a fiddle to marry him in order to keep it ready to hand.

"You have only two faults," he went on. "One will cure itself. You think too much about money."

"Do I?"

"But the other—unluckily, you are very beautiful."

Was it only the ghost of a dream, or was there really the dim suspicion of life in his voice when he called her beautiful? The first word of intelligible praise she had ever heard in her whole life made her own heart beat, though there was nothing in his tone to tell a bystander that he was not speaking still of a piano-case instead of a girl. So perhaps, after all, the little thrill that ran along her strings was spontaneous, and not caused by sympathy.

"Prosper and his like judge music by the eye. They hear with their eyes, just as some women sing with theirs. For myself I should prefer you to be as ugly as sin, so that the triumph might be only

Art's when the time comes. But I must take you as you are. Yes, you are very beautiful; and it just doubles the danger of loving you, I mean. There are other people who will want to get hold of you besides Prosper."

"Yes?" After all, this was more interesting than a music lesson.

His fingers kept running vaguely over the keys as he went on. "There are people like Prosper who will talk to you of money. But there are others who will talk to you about other things, and want to buy, not your voice, but you."

"Because I am beautiful?"

"Because you are beautiful."

"I think," said Noëmi, almost as if she were really thinking, "I think I should like to be bought because I am beautiful."

"What?" exclaimed her master, bringing his vague runs to an end with a heavy and abrupt discord.

"Yes," she said, without starting. "I should like to be rich because I am beautiful. And just not because I am like wood and wire."

"I must marry you—that's all, then. So now—go on."

"Why?" she asked, leaning on the piano again, and looking at him with the whole fulness of her eyes.

"Why? What do you mean? Because we have been wasting time?"

"I mean—I don't mean now. I mean, ever. What am I going on for? And how long am I to go on?"

"Haven't I told you ten thousand times?"

"Please tell me again."

"Ten thousand and one times? Very well. For the sake of Art."

"Does Art make people so very rich?" she asked in a voice that bore no more taint of avarice than a nightingale's.

"Rich!" he said, with a scorn that passed unnoticed over her head; for it was not aimed at her, but at the legions of enemies, with whom his air was always so crowded as to be an incessant battle-field of one against the world. "Ask the people who live by it, and hear what they will say. Why do people follow it but to grow rich? Why do people take to any trade? If you want to be rich, you are in the road. And if men and women grow rich by the sham—why, when they have the real again, they will drown you in gold," he brought out with two full chords on the piano. But his sarcastic logic missed fire; her mind was as literal as the multipli-

cation table, and she thought she would like to be drowned in that way. "Yes," she thought besides, "no wonder he wants to keep me! And if I am beautiful too?" And the man himself had charmed away half his own ugliness by giving her beauty its first word of praise.

No wonder, if he was able to read her at all, that he felt by instinct how absolutely needful it was to bind her to the cause by the strongest possible chain. For Art's sake the man would have married her, had it been needful in that case, if she had indeed been as ugly as sin. But even he could not fail to know that any day, any hour almost, might bring the death-blow to his usurpation of her life and soul. Italy was not the country where beauty is allowed to live unclaimed, or where women are left to die in ignorance of what love means. Any minute, even, he might see his labour lost, and his instrument of final triumph wrenched from his hands. Worse still, he might lose it after years more of labour, on the very eve of victory. Was there no note of human love in all this? He was conscious of none; but, as to the whole question, it may be that he would, after all, have tried the experiment of not marrying her had she indeed been as ugly as sin. Motives are queer cobwebs, and hard to untwine.

She was still thinking. Love has as many tricks as it has shapes, and, when absent, thinks nothing of deputing its power to pity or to praise. In this case, it was to praise. To hear herself called beautiful was so far like first love that it gave her a new sense of conscious life; since she had heard the words, she had grown twice as beautiful.

But one need not follow too subtly the visions of a girl whose path lay so plainly before her. The master enchanter, whoever he was, had already given her an earnest of his power by transforming her from a usurer's house-servant in the Roman Ghetto to a beautiful woman, for whom strangers were already contending as to who should give her five thousand francs for a season, while she knew herself, on the authority of magic, to be worth perhaps a hundred times more. She had been asked to marry, not a man,

but an incarnate diamond mine. Some woman's instinct may have sighed to her that there was another life somewhere; but it was a very faint sigh—too faint to hear even its own whisper. There are women, who never heard of the Ghetto, whose thoughts would scorn her for even such a ghost of a sigh.

"Go on!" said her master once more. And on she went—through something more than a song. Every note was a diamond. If Prosper had once more been lodging in the next room, he must inevitably have burst in with an offer of his five thousand francs twice told. And she would have refused.

But what would she have said had she seen her master, lover, magician, after he left her, how he sat down at his desk, and said to himself:

"I can take my full time now. In ten years she will be in her prime—and then! Yes—it was the only thing to do," said Noëmi's lover, as he set to work upon the skeleton of his score, in which he forgot even Noëmi, and saw only, in a vision of far-off glory, that triumph of Art over all meaner things for which he had sacrificed name, wealth, and fame, and would think nothing of sacrificing his whole self; and what, in the name of the cause, mattered a beggar-girl from the Ghetto? If the car must roll over her, let it roll.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XII. MISS MILDMAY AND JACK DE BARON.

LADY GEORGE was not left long in her new house without visitors. Early on the day after her arrival, Mrs. Houghton came to her, and began at once, with great volubility, to explain how the land lay, and to suggest how it should be made to lie for the future.

"I am so glad you have come. As soon, you know, as they positively forbade me to get on horseback again this winter, I made up my mind to come to town. What is there to keep me down there if I don't ride? I promised to obey if I was brought here—and to disobey if I was left there. Mr. Houghton goes up and down, you know. It is hard upon him, poor old fellow. But then the other thing would be harder on me. He and papa are together somewhere now, arranging about the spring meetings. They have got their stables joined, and I know very well who will have the best of that. A man has to get up very early to see all round papa. But Mr. Houghton is so rich, it doesn't signify. And now, my dear, what are you going to do? and what is Lord George going to do? I am dying to see Lord George. I daresay you are getting a little tired of him by this time."

"Indeed, I'm not."

"You haven't picked up courage enough yet to say so; that's it, my dear. I've brought cards from Mr. Houghton, which means to say that though he is down somewhere at Newmarket in the flesh, he is to be supposed to have called upon you

and Lord George. And now we want you both to come and dine with us on Monday. I know Lord George is particular, and so I've brought a note. You can't have anything to do yet, and of course you'll come. Houghton will be back on Sunday, and goes down again on Tuesday morning. To hear him talk about it you'd think he was the keenest man in England across a country. Say that you'll come."

"I'll ask Lord George."

"Fiddle-de-dee. Lord George will be only too delighted to come and see me. I've got such a nice cousin to introduce to you; not one of the Germain sort, you know, who are all perhaps a little slow. This man is Jack De Baron, a nephew of papa's. He's in the Coldstreams, and I do think you'll like him. There's nothing on earth he can't do, from waltzing down to polo. And old Mildmay will be there, and Guss Mildmay, who is dying in love with Jack."

"And is Jack dying in love with Guss?"

"Oh dear no! not a bit. You needn't be afraid. Jack De Baron has just five hundred a year and his commission, and must, I should say, be over head and ears in debt. Miss Mildmay may perhaps have five thousand for her fortune. Put this and that together, and you can hardly see anything comfortable in the way of matrimony, can you?"

"Then I fear your—Jack—is mercenary."

"Mercenary? of course he's mercenary. That is to say, he doesn't want to go to destruction quite at one leap. But he's awfully fond of falling in love, and when he is in love he'll do almost anything—except marry."

"Then, if I were you, I shouldn't ask—Guss—to meet him."

"She can fight her own battles, and wouldn't thank me at all if I were to fight them for her after that fashion. There'll be nobody else except Houghton's sister, Hetta. You never met Hetta Houghton?"

"I've heard of her."

"I should think so. 'Not to know her'—I forget the words; but if you don't know Hetta Houghton, you're just nowhere. She has lots of money, and lives all alone, and says whatever comes uppermost, and does what she pleases. She goes everywhere, and is up to everything. I always made up my mind I wouldn't be an old maid, but I declare I envy Hetta Houghton. But then she'd be nothing unless she had money. There'll be eight of us, and at this time of the year we dine at half-past seven, sharp. Can I take you anywhere? The carriage can come back with you."

"Thank you, no. I am going to pick Lord George up at the Carlton at four."

"How nice! I wonder how long you'll go on picking up Lord George at the Carlton."

She could only suppose, when her friend was gone, that this was the right kind of thing. No doubt Lady Susanna had warned her against Mrs. Houghton, but then she was not disposed to take Lady Susanna's warnings on any subject. Her father had known that she intended to know the woman; and her father, though he had cautioned her very often as to the old women at Manor Cross, as he called them, had never spoken a word of caution to her as to Mrs. Houghton. And her husband was well aware of the intended intimacy.

She picked up her husband, and rather liked being kept waiting a few minutes at the club-door in her brougham. Then they went together to look at a new picture, which was being exhibited by gaslight in Bond Street, and she began to feel that the pleasures of London were delightful.

"Don't you think those two old priests are magnificent?" she said, pressing on his arm, in the obscurity of the darkened chamber.

"I don't know that I care much about old priests," said Lord George.

"But the heads are so fine."

"I daresay. Sacerdotal pictures never please me. Didn't you say you wanted

to go to Swan and Edgar's?" He would not sympathise with her about pictures, but perhaps she would be able to find out his taste at last.

He seemed quite well satisfied to dine with the Houghtons, and did, in fact, call at the house before that day came round. "I was in Berkeley-square this morning," he said one day, "but I didn't find any one."

"Nobody ever is at home, I suppose," she said. "Look here. There have been Lady Brabazon, and Mrs. Patmore Green, and Mrs. Montacute Jones. Who is Mrs. Montacute Jones?"

"I never heard of her."

"Dear me; how very odd. I daresay it was kind of her to come. And yesterday the Countess of Care called. Is not she some relative?"

"She is my mother's first cousin."

"And then there was dear old Miss Tallowax. And I wasn't at home to see one of them."

"No one, I suppose, ever is at home in London, unless they fix a day for seeing people."

Lady George, having been specially asked to come "sharp" to her friend's dinner-party, arrived with her husband exactly at the hour named, and found no one in the drawing-room. In a few minutes Mrs. Houghton hurried in, apologising. "It's all Mr. Houghton's fault indeed, Lord George. He was to have been in town yesterday, but would stay down and hunt to-day. Of course the train was late, and of course he was so tired that he couldn't dress without going to sleep first." As nobody else came for a quarter of an hour Mrs. Houghton had an opportunity of explaining some things. "Has Mrs. Montacute Jones called? I suppose you were out of your wits to find out who she was. She's a very old friend of papa's, and I asked her to call. She gives awfully swell parties, and has no end of money. She was one of the Montacutes of Montacute, and so she sticks her own name on to her husband's. He's alive, I believe, but he never shows. I think she keeps him somewhere down in Wales."

"How odd!"

"It is a little queer, but when you come to know her you'll find it will make no difference. She's the ugliest old woman in London, but I'd be as ugly as she is to have her diamonds."

"I wouldn't," said Mary.

"Your husband cares about your appearance," said Mrs. Houghton, turning her eyes upon Lord George. He simpered and looked pleased, and did not seem to be at all disgusted by their friend's slang, and yet, had his wife talked of "awfully swell" parties, he would, she was well aware, have rebuked her seriously.

Miss Houghton—Hetta Houghton—was the first to arrive, and she somewhat startled Mary by the gorgeous glories of her dress, though Mrs. Houghton afterwards averred that she wasn't "a patch upon Mrs. Montacute Jones." But Miss Houghton was a lady, and though over forty years of age, was still handsome.

"Been hunting to-day, has he?" she said. "Well, if he likes it, I shan't complain. But I thought he liked his ease too well, to travel fifty miles up to town after riding about all day."

"Of course he's knocked up, and at his age it's quite absurd," said the young wife. "But, Hetta, I want you to know my particular friend, Lady George Germain. Lord George, if he'll allow me to say so, is a cousin, though I'm afraid we have to go back to Noah to make it out."

"Your great-grandmother was my great-grandmother's sister. That's not so very far off."

"When you get to grandmothers no fellow can understand it, can they, Mary?" Then came Mr. and Miss Mildmay. He was a gray-haired old gentleman, rather short and rather fat, and she looked to be just such another girl as Mrs. Houghton herself had been, though blessed with more regular beauty. She was certainly handsome, but she carried with her that wearied air of being nearly worn out by the toil of searching for a husband, which comes upon some young women after the fourth or fifth year of their labours. Fortune had been very hard upon Augusta Mildmay. Early in her career she had fallen in love, while abroad, with an Italian nobleman, and had immediately been carried off home by her anxious parents. Then in London she had fallen in love again with an English nobleman, an eldest son, with wealth of his own. Nothing could be more proper, and the young man had fallen also in love with her. All her friends were beginning to hate her with virulence, so lucky had she been, when, on a sudden, the young lord told her that the match would not please his father and mother, and that therefore there must be an end of it. What was there to be done?

All London had talked of it, all London must know the utter failure. Nothing more cruel, more barefaced, more unjust, had ever been perpetrated. A few years since all the Mildmays in England, one after another, would have had a shot at the young nobleman. But in these days there seems to be nothing for a girl to do but to bear it and try again. So Augusta Mildmay bore it, and did try again; tried very often again. And now she was in love with Jack De Baron. The worst of Guss Mildmay was that, through it all, she had a heart, and would like the young men—would like them, or perhaps dislike them, equally to her disadvantage. Old gentlemen, such as was Mr. Houghton, had been willing to condone all her faults, and all her loves, and to take her as she was. But when the moment came, she would not have her Houghton, and then she was in the market again. Now a young woman entering the world cannot make a greater mistake than not to know her own line, or, knowing it, not to stick to it. Those who are thus weak are sure to fall between two stools. If a girl chooses to have a heart, let her marry the man of her heart, and take her mutton-chops and bread and cheese, her stuff gown and her six children, as they may come. But if she can decide that such horrors are horrid to her, and that they must at any cost be avoided, then let her take her Houghton when he comes, and not hark back upon feelings and fancies, upon liking and loving, upon youth and age. If a girl has money and beauty too, of course she can pick and choose. Guss Mildmay had no money to speak of, but she had beauty enough to win either a working barrister or a rich old sinner. She was quite able to fall in love with the one and flirt with the other at the same time; but when the moment for decision came, she could not bring herself to put up with either. At present she was in real truth in love with Jack De Baron, and had brought herself to think that if Jack would ask her, she would risk everything. But were he to do so, which was not probable, she would immediately begin to calculate what could be done by Jack's moderate income and her own small fortune. She and Mrs. Houghton kissed each other affectionately, being at the present moment close in each other's confidences, and then she was introduced to Lady George. "Adelaide hasn't a chance," was Miss Mildmay's first thought as she looked at the young wife.

Then came Jack De Baron. Mary was much interested in seeing a man of whom she had heard so striking an account, and for the love of whom she had been told that a girl was almost dying. Of course all that was to be taken with many grains of salt; but still the fact of the love and the attractive excellence of the man had been impressed upon her. She declared to herself at once that his appearance was very much in his favour, and a fancy passed across her mind that he was somewhat like that ideal man of whom she herself had dreamed, ever so many years ago as it seemed to her now, before she had made up her mind that she would change her ideal and accept Lord George Germain. He was about the middle height, light-haired, broad-shouldered, with a pleasant smiling mouth and well-formed nose; but, above all, he had about him that pleasure-loving look, that appearance of taking things jauntily, and of enjoying life, which she in her young girlhood had regarded as being absolutely essential to a pleasant lover. There are men whose very eyes glance business, whose every word imports care, who step as though their shoulders were weighted with thoughtfulness, who breathe solicitude, and who seem to think that all the things of life are too serious for smiles. Lord George was such a man, though he had in truth very little business to do. And then there are men who are always playfellows with their friends, who—even should misfortune be upon them—still smile and make the best of it, who come across one like sunbeams, and who, even when tears are falling, produce the tints of a rainbow. Such a one Mary Lovelace had perhaps seen in her childhood, and had then dreamed of. Such a one was Jack De Baron, at any rate to the eye.

And such a one in truth he was. Of course the world had spoiled him. He was in the Guards. He was fond of pleasure. He was fairly well off in regard to all his own wants, for his cousin had simply imagined those debts with which ladies are apt to believe that young men of pleasure must be overwhelmed. He had gradually taught himself to think that his own luxuries and his own comforts should in his own estimation be paramount to everything. He was not naturally selfish, but his life had almost necessarily engendered selfishness. Marrying had come to be looked upon as an evil—as had old age—not of course an unavoidable evil,

but one into which a man will probably fall sooner or later. To put off marriage as long as possible, and when it could no longer be put off to marry money, was a part of his creed. In the meantime the great delight of his life came from women's society. He neither gambled nor drank. He hunted and fished, and shot deer and grouse, and occasionally drove a coach to Windsor. But little love affairs, flirtation, and intrigues, which were never intended to be guilty, but which now and again brought him into some trouble, gave its charm to his life. On such occasions he would, too, at times, be very badly in love, assuring himself sometimes with absolute heroism that he would never again see this married woman, or declaring to himself in moments of self-sacrificial grandness that he would at once marry that unmarried girl. And then, when he had escaped from some especial trouble, he would take to his regiment for a month, swearing to himself that for the next year he would see no woman besides his aunts and his grandmother. When making this resolution he might have added his cousin Adelaide. They were close friends, but between them there had never been the slightest spark of a flirtation.

In spite of all his little troubles, Captain De Baron was a very popular man. There was a theory abroad about him that he always behaved like a gentleman, and that his troubles were misfortunes rather than faults. Ladies always liked him, and his society was agreeable to men because he was neither selfish nor loud. He talked only a little, but still enough not to be thought dull. He never bragged or bullied or bounced. He didn't want to shoot more deer or catch more salmon than another man. He never cut a fellow down in the hunting-field. He never borrowed money, but would sometimes lend it when a reason was given. He was probably as ignorant as an owl of anything really pertaining to literature, but he did not display his ignorance. He was regarded by all who knew him as one of the most fortunate of men. He regarded himself as being very far from blessed, knowing that there must come a speedy end to the things which he only half enjoyed, and feeling partly ashamed of himself in that he had found for himself no better part.

"Jack," said Mrs. Houghton, "I can't blow you up for being late, because Mr.

Houghton has not yet condescended to show himself. Let me introduce you to Lady George Germain." Then he smiled in his peculiar way, and Mary thought his face the most beautiful she had ever seen. "Lord George Germain, who allows me to call him my cousin, though he isn't as near as you are. My sister-in-law, you know." Jack shook hands with the old lady in his most cordial manner. "I think you have seen Mr. Mildmay before, and Miss Mildmay." Mary could not but look at the greeting between the two, and she saw that Miss Mildmay almost turned up her nose at him. She was quite sure that Mrs. Houghton had been wrong about the love. There had surely only been a pretence of love. But Mrs. Houghton had been right, and Mary had not yet learned to read correctly the signs which men and women hang out.

At last Mr. Houghton came down. "Upon my word," said his wife, "I wonder you are not ashamed to show yourself."

"Who says I'm not ashamed? I'm very much ashamed. But how can I help it if the trains won't keep their time? We were hunting all day to-day—nothing very good, Lord George, but on the trot from eleven to four. That tires a fellow, you know. And the worst of it is, I've got to do it again on Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday."

"Is there a necessity?" asked Lord George.

"When a man begins that kind of thing he must go through with it. Hunting is like women. It's a jealous sport. Lady George, may I take you down to dinner? I am so sorry to have kept you waiting."

THE PRESS OF THE TRADES.

SUCH a trades' newspaper as *The Builder*, so prominent and honourable in its long existence, almost makes us forget that it is, after all, only an organ for one set of readers, treating the topics (many-branched certainly) in which they are interested, and charged necessarily with its own technicalities. Substituting the words *The Engineer* for *The Builder*, and almost the same paragraphs might be repeated. Getting, next, quite into the professions, there is *The Law Times*, with other legal journals abreast of it—just as building and engineering have not been exhausted when the two papers put as their representatives have had their naming; there is *The Lancet*, with other

platforms for medicine, surgery, and their interests; there are the gazettes of the Army, the Navy, the Church; of Banking, Shipping, Mining; of Patentees; of Accountants; of the worlds known as the Chemical, Pharmaceutical, Nautical, Electrical, Theatrical, Botanical, Horological, Agricultural, Musical, Photographic, Phonographic, Phonetic, Mechanic, Artistic. Add *The Gardeners' Magazine* to these; add *The Farmer*; add *The Commercial Travellers' Gazette*, *The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette*, the sporting papers, *The Timber Trades' Journal*, *The Brewers' Guardian*, *The Colliery Guardian*, *The Mark Lane Express*—and it probably will be thought that in them are marshalled all the mouth-pieces of all occupations, avocations, professions, callings, arts, and mysteries, with not another example left behind. Stay. Before this thought can have had time to take solid shape, it will be seen that it must have a supplement. Milliners, dress-makers, needle-workers, have a large literature of their own in certain ornate magazines of fashion, owning French as well as English titles, in certain journals for Englishwomen, young and more mature. These speak for so important a section of workers and designers, of employers and employed, that when trades' newspapers are the theme, for justice as well as for gallantry, they must not be omitted. And even beyond these we come to journals circulating among the initiated, written by some of a fraternity for the behoof of the rest of their fraternity, the mere names of which are unknown to the outer world, and must, as a rule, remain so. Exclusiveness is a necessity of their existence, of their concentration of aim and purpose. Yet, gatherings of facts can be had from these journals of quite wholesome and pleasant interest—being sure of which, a few of them have been collected together, and may be here presented.

Imprimis, there is *The Hairdressers' Chronicle*. Acquaintance is made in this with a *Hairdressers' Academy* in the metropolis; with co-operative societies (including one for French "hands"), where there are schools of instruction, asking the moderate terms of half-a-crown for ten weeks' teaching, including the successful feature of dressings on living models for small prizes, and the presentation of a photograph to each master-subscriber of the most approved coiffure. Acquaintance is made with provincial societies and associations. In Glasgow,

for instance, the life of these is vigorous; they have budded into three stirring institutions, The United, The Masters', the Philanthropic—only that hairdressers in Glasgow are mostly called in the old French style, barbers. Edinburgh advertises its association too; so, to name a few more towns, do Halifax, Hanley, Bradford, Nottingham, Birmingham—all having a periodical day of meeting, a chairman, a secretary. In *The Chronicle*, hairdressers' businesses to be disposed of are described as eligible because they have "three schools," because they are opposite an hotel "which alone supports the business," because they do mostly a gentlemen's trade; disengaged assistants are described as eligible because they are gentlemen's hands well up in boardwork, because they are boardsmen, can shave, and have a fair knowledge of ladies' work as well. Young ladies as assistants are looked upon as treacherous. A writer in *The Chronicle* says—no doubt a "valued correspondent:" "Should any hairdresser at this moment be dreaming that he has complete command of ever-so many sparkling and accomplished girls, who are an attraction to his shop, let him wake from the reverie, for Hymen has but to raise his finger, and, presto, his rooms will be deserted at the shortest notice the law will permit." When the fancy-dress-ball season is beginning, hairdressers are counselled in their *Chronicle* to supply themselves with a certain Parisian art-production, giving engravings of the coiffures of La Duchesse du Maine, Louis Quatorze; of La Princesse de Lamballe, Louis Seize; of a Coiffure du Directoire, 1797; of a Diane de Poitiers, 1600, and so on. In the advertising columns we may learn where are the depôts for wax busts (a fine assortment always in hand); for hairdressers' scissors; for human hair, taper-curved, taper-straight, English turned, nearly clubbed; for chloroform wash for bald patches; for *Le Friseur*, an illustrated hairdressers' journal published in Berlin; for *Le Moniteur de la Coiffure*, and *La Reine de la Coiffure*, two trade organs published in Paris, embellished with engravings, and made useful by instructions, in the French and English languages, how the new dressings are to be done. A well-written "leader" in *The Hairdressers' Chronicle*, too, urges hairdressers to organise lectures on elementary chemistry, on the historical coiffure, the growth and structure of human hair, the diseases of it, the best methods of their treatment; for hairdressers are the only

body of tradesmen, the writer says, who "seem afraid of entering into engagements which they know will benefit themselves, for fear at the same time they would prove advantageous to their brethren." Pending the adoption of this properly-advocated reform, *The Chronicle* gives hairdressers all the information it can. It tells them not to be in too great a hurry to believe that the highest ladies in Paris have discarded chignons, and wear only their own neatly-knotted hair; it tells them of the failures in the trade, the adjudications, the misdemeanours, the actions-at-law; it tells them of any innovations and inventions—for instance, that "the principle of the rotary brush in hairdressing is now extended to the management of studs," by means of a patent groomer, that grooms horses in five minutes; it tells them even (jocosely) of the Yankee barber who has a hollow ball attached to his scissors, the wind from which blows away the fragments of his customers' hair as fast as he can cut them off.

Saint Crispin is a trade journal, also, which calls for attention. "There's nothing like leather," is the motto it bears boldly under its title; and it manfully proceeds to take the bull by the horns in a second fashion, inasmuch as it carries a pair of ox-horns to divide these words, engraved and intermingled. Immediately underneath this it is quite in character to find leathers advertised—largely. They are known as Butts, it seems; they are known as Union bends; they are known as Oak soles, as English shoulders, as Foreign ranges, as Cordorans, as Kip sides (rolled and struck), as Bronze roans, as Basils, as Russet offals, as White splits, as Coloured skivers, as Crust kangaroos, Enamelled seals, Levant gnus, Horse hides, Memel calves, Strained sheep, French kids, Calendered lamb. Turning from this, it is seen that other singular articles are for sale. Some of these are channelling-machines, root trees, half-whites, Croydons, malleable hobs, cut tip-nails, B. Y. heels, toe-plates, rasps, grinder, wrought countersunks, and all kit tools. A tone of badinage is assumed by Saint Crispin. This is observed in the columns which are filled with communications under the titles, "Dodges of the Trades," and so on. One "dodge" especially revealed is that called Misfits, which the revealer happily styles Pictures of the Old Masters, and which he declares to be regular Northampton manufacture, as impossible to be

measured goods returned as it would be for a baker to hand out of his steaming oven new-made loaves of stale bread. Many firms keep more than ordinary bad-fitters, says the revealer satirically, if these be misfits; it is much more certain that numbers of persons are always buying shagreen spectacles, that in all these cases the customers are sold, whilst the boots they bargain for are not above half-soled. Then corns are spoken of, facetiously, as a legacy left by boots—as a range of infernal mountains to plague and torture, proving that the evil that men do lives after them. The women “who exhibit their folly by the high-heeled boots of to-day” Saint Crispin calls geese; and it prophesies that in twenty years’ time there will not be an upright old woman to be seen. But Saint Crispin can be historical and scientific within its own domain, when its mood becomes serious and solemn. For history, it tells how Agincourt was fought on Saint Crispin’s-day, and how Praise-God Barebones was a currier in Fleet-street. For science it gives a sterling paper on the best-proved tanning agents—the same being hemlocks and willows, the many varieties of which are mentioned, with their English as well as their Latin names. Continental transactions are searched, too, and quotations given from a speech at the Shoe Manufacturers’ Congress at Frankfort, in which the German speaker tried to rouse the energies of his German hearers by reproaching them that they have to purchase their best lastings in France, their best straps in England, their best elastics in Switzerland, the best shoe-pegs in North America, their best shoe-paste in Austria, and so on. In general matters Saint Crispin gives his opinion that “exhibitions do not effect much, because it does not pay to convey boots hundreds of miles with the mere chance of being patted on the back and praised as a good boy;” and Saint Crispin tells of a certain George, drunken and a cobbler, who, having no leather to mend a pair of boots, stripped off the calf cover of his mother’s bible, stitched it on, blacked it, and never spoke about the “bible boots” afterwards without much enjoyment and a self-congratulatory chuckle.

There shall be a little call made now upon The Bakers’ Record.

“I hold every man a debtor to his profession,” a baker is recorded in it to have quoted—“I hold every man a debtor to his profession, from the which, as men of

course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they, of duty, to endeavour themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto.”

From Lord Bacon is this, the baker himself records; and he records also that he quotes it because he desires to call the attention of the baking trade to what Lord Bacon has said. It is not to be touched. As a thought it stands golden; as a standard, raised above the heads of fellow-workers for a goal for them to aim at, the selector stands—next to golden, and, ungrudgingly he is told so. But the selector speaks at a Bakers’ Association; and let an enquiry be made as to what the main business of this association, and others akin to it, really is. It seems at first all glamour, mystery. The words are in one report: “A complaint was brought from Such-a-road, and Messrs. This, That, and T’other had something to say respecting Some-farther-road, upon which the doctor received instructions to attend and administer.” The words are in another report: “Mr. Somebody’s smiling countenance betokens success, and he told how he and the other doctor had been enabled so far to effect a cure as to remove one of those very objectionable plasters never prescribed by genuine practitioners. They had also been up and down the land persuading and conciliating, and would pledge their professional reputation that the health of a certain district would be firmly established by next Monday.” The same report continues: “He learned that two gentlemen in Which-lane would also rise on that auspicious morning to a higher level,” that “having heard the sound of fourpence three-farthings in Brixmondton he had been forthwith to the brickyard, had found it a true sound, but that the bricks were deaf to its charms, and consequently that nobody else was going to listen.” The glamour gradually departs, as this is thought over; a glimmer of light takes its place. Besides, other reports read that Mr. Someone “had succeeded in obtaining a promise from those gentlemen who have been fivepence halfpenny to advance to sixpence;” that Messrs. Who and What “had gained a promise from Messrs. Dough and Flour to raise a halfpenny this week and a halfpenny next;” that “the leading shops in the road will not be trifled with;” that “unpleasant tidings had arrived that Cottage-road was troubled again by Mr. Household, who had gone to fivepence;” that Mr. Fancy

"would not go up, and declared he had two minds to go down another halfpenny;" that two gentlemen had "waited upon Mrs. Roll to request that lady to go to sixpence halfpenny;" that "those gentlemen who had stood true to their colours merited praise, and it was to be hoped they would be amply repaid in being able 'to maintain' the highest price." And it is manifest from all of this that an organised system of watch and ward is kept up by (some) bakers, who compel the adoption of a certain tariff of prices, or else (like the Cornishmen) they will know the reason why; and although these gentlemen vow at these same associations that when "a figure is too low to give satisfaction" they only wish to raise it to a living price to obtain a legitimate profit-upon their several undertakings," the sound of this is a little discordant with that entreaty to every man to be a help and ornament unto his profession, and it causes wonder. However, bakers, there is no doubt, have a right to be reckoned as knowing the reasons of their own ruling. And when they are found coming forward briskly to seek situations on the grounds that they are Scotch forehands, light second hands, bread foremen, quick setters, van men; can pipe, can drive, can mould, can set (full price preferred; though, as an insidious recommendation); that they are well up in all kinds of yeast, in Vienna bread, in pastry, in small goods, ices, creams, and jellies; and are well used, in addition, to serving customers, or barrow; the acknowledgment must come that these are genuine accomplishments, and that the owners of them must not be too easily reined. Gratitude comes to 'The Bakers' Record, too, for giving such felicitous information. The Organ gives comfort and content by it. So it does, when it says that first-rate single hands, second hands, third hands, can be supplied immediately by certain houses on application at the bar. So it does more than all when, in detailing the visit of some London delegate to some provincial meeting, it arranges the subject in long paragraphs, headed, like a royal progress, The Start, The Journey, The Welcome, The Object, The Meeting, The Mission, &c., quite seriously; and even makes known how the delegate did not drive to the station, but walked there, in a glow; how he was much moved to tenderness by a young lady in the train; how he had such and such reflections; how his bodily con-

dition was at last somewhat jaded, because he had been precisely six hours and a quarter without partaking of either food or drink. With baking interests touched off thus roseately and "interviewingly," every modern journalistic improvement has been adopted, and nothing further remains to be desired.

The Grocer is a trades' newspaper, business-like, compact, and, if age be good datum on which to form judgment, satisfactorily established and flourishing. Coming into the market with it, The Grocers' Journal is a younger brother, cheap, to suit the requirements of a cheap-press century; as both speak to grocers, though, and, as it is this technical speech which is being now considered, the two bear the significance of one, with the family tie remaining undivided. The family tie of grocer, too, is a tie wide-spreading, it must be recollected. Oilmen may lay claim to it, provision-dealers, tobacconists, drysalters; and as these claims—and a large variety of others—lie through the ground occupied by the brush trade, the glue trade, the preserve-jar trade, the sausage-casing trade, and many more, it is rather hard to say where kinship is lost sight of and ended. Somebody's Patent Cat Food, for example, is an odd item to appear among advertisements to grocers. It is curious, also, to read, "Wanted, a hundred Cads in good condition." When singed sides follow this, and pickled mids, it is not at all extraordinary that graves should be brought into grocers' consideration. India mess, another article of purchase and sale, sounds political: Plantation tridge and Barbadoes dabs seem to touch the Slavery Circular; Faro taps savour of the Kursaal; Common titlers, Mother cloves, Naturals, recall witchery and superstition; shute-stored, rough-riddlings, handed-squares, jaggery, are jaggery, if the a in that word is a misprint for u, and something necromantic and cabalistic is intended. Yet, all these are varieties of sugars, salts, bacons, porks, and what not, forming ordinary grocers' merchandise, or they would not be so regularly and neatly listed. It requires some knowledge to master them. Then butters are further catalogued as Stubble Kiel, Friesland, Normandy (in crocks), Jersey (in baskets), Home Counties, Pure Paris, Ostend; cheeses, besides those better known, are Gouda, Red Edain, Wiltshire Loaf; bacons are Hambro' Size-ables, Waterford Intermediates, Canadian

Smalls, Camberland Cuts, Short-rib Middles. It is thought well, too, that grocers should know how much Irish butter, for instance, is shipped for England and Scotland from the ports of Cork and Waterford every month; and accordingly there is a memorandum that one firm of purveyors despatched eleven thousand nine hundred and fifty-five firkins in September—nearly four hundred a day—whilst there is no overlooking of the fact that a small dealer, in the same time, despatched only his modest two. Altogether some eighty thousand firkins of butter were shipped for England by Irishmen owning such familiar names as O'Sullivan, Flynn, Murphy, Malony, Dogherty, Scanlan, Phelan, Kearney, in this selected month of September; and if that little commercial item be well borne in mind, it may have interest for Home Rulers and other politicians, as well as for oilmen, provision-dealers, drysalers, grocers, and the rest. What, however, is purely to the point held by these last dealers is the fact that railway companies, in the midlands, have arranged to cellar their goods for them on delivery, but not to thrall them, or place them on settlers. Grocers, it is clear—or is it obscure?—must congratulate each other heartily. The arrangement was made, it is announced, in consequence of a "ring" formed by traffic managers, owing to "thoughtless tradesmen requesting carriers' employes to carry chests of tea, or bags of sugar, up ladder-looking steps or along galleries." Nothing but a meeting of grocers and carriers could settle this abuse; so a meeting was convened, and a law laid down. Another law relating to grocers, of long practice and acceptance, is that a quarter-pound sampling is allowed out of a caddy-box of tea—the abbreviated "cad" of recent mentioning—that a half-pound sampling is allowed out of a half-chest, a whole pound out of a whole chest. These withdrawn quantities are to be substituted by the same weight of tea of equal value; and, inasmuch as some dealers now are evading this honest condition, and filling up with goods of an inferior price, it is suggested that the portions be packed securely in sealed bags, for ready identification. Other little matters relating to tea are that importers advertise to sell at "a great drop;" that all tea-drinkers are advised to make their tea with water the instant it rises to the boil the first time after it has been drawn cold; water that

has been kept half-heated—in a boiler, say—and that has been off the boil and on it, and off the boil and on it again, being found to be minus that life and freshness that allow of the fine aroma of the tea to be retained.

Grocers' assistants, a leader in one of their journals says, must possess a great deal of tact. When old ladies enter a grocer's shop, they "can talk for hours about things which are of no possible interest to mortal man—let imagination complete the painful picture; but the grocer must listen to the old ladies—of both sexes—or perish." Grocers' assistants, also, are to possess great skill in "dressing" a window. They are to hussel their fruit well in a long wet bag, and then they are not to put it in their windows in a mass with soap, candles, butter, cheese, and bacon. If they are expert at the counter, they may call at Mr. So-and-so's. If they understand soap-boiling, plain and mottled, and have no objection to go to New Zealand, they may call at Mr. Somebody Else's, and get an engagement of a good three pounds a week for their profitable specialty. Travellers, not minding samples of a weight under two pounds, may have such for canvassing; and assistants themselves seem to be proud to be able to say that they can solicit, can serve well at either counter, can chop sugar, are confidential firsts, good wrappers, out of house, with West-end references. All these may remember pleasantly that some dried-fruit merchants live where they should live, in Pudding-lane; that if any event happens of importance to these merchants or to themselves—such as their opening a branch establishment, their retirement from business, their enlargement of their premises—the fact will have a neat paragraph in a column that is a sort of Court Circular among the Commons, called *The Week*; that confectioners' jewellery—for enclosing in their bon-bon packets and so on—is sold at the miraculous price of eightpence for a gross, in quantities of not less than five gross, however, which means seven hundred and twenty articles for three shillings and fourpence, or exactly eighteen articles for a penny; that, as a last item that shall be cited, there is a pamphlet selling, of momentous interest, entitled "*How to checkmate Co-ops.*"

There remain yet many other trades' newspapers. These are known as *The Tailor*, *The Ironmonger*, *The Printers' Register*, *The Stationer*, *The Tanner*—the

price of which is not the same as its title, for it is twopence more—The Tobacco Trade Price, The Draper, The Furniture Gazette, The Hotel Journal, The Saddler, The Paper-Makers' Circular, The Labour News, The Sewing-Machine Gazette, The Boot and Shoe Trades' Chronicle, The English Labourer, The Journal of Gas Lighting, The Dairyman, the youngest born of all. A few others possibly have been overlooked. But it would be wearisome to do more than give the names of these—not because they would not yield as much interest as the others, but because ordinary limits have been reached; and now the names are down, the subject shall be left. There must be a short addendum though in respect of one of these organs, The Tailor. If women, smarting with the rod of amiable sarcasm about their consideration for dress, should chance to light upon a stray copy of it, it will not seem to them that men, in their consideration for dress, are so vastly far behind them. Tailors, it will be discovered, are kept sedulously well informed as to all movement in masculine fashion. A new coat has been seen, they are warned, "reaching quite half-way down the calf, single-breasted, having a long vent behind, the buttons coming through to the outside." There will be a demand for a certain coat that "does not define the body very closely; made from ribbed diagonals, gray, brown, and drab; the edges either flat-braided or bound wide with heavy military braid." "In some suits made by a firm in Aristocracy-street for Mr. Blue Blood"—the latest Count d'Orsay, it may be presumed, put down by name, unconscious gentleman!—"and intended to be worn during a yachting-cruise, the coats were of the reefer style, but lengthy, and buttoning straight down, entirely hiding the vest." Also, "many young gents who wished to see themselves in the extreme of fashion," and "a number of young gents, who never feel that they are dressed unless wearing something decidedly new," will "take to" a garment three or four inches longer than one represented; "but gentlemen who prefer dressing with decorum and good taste," and who like "a small roll and collar buttoned pretty close up, the space between being very comfortably and pleasantly filled up by a fancy woollen scarf," the cloth for this, moreover, having "a curl on its face;"—such gentlemen, it is asserted, will wear the coat that "will hold the first place this season." "Dual

garmenture" also comes in for much close discussion, science, speculation, and advice. The article is "draughted" by a plumb-line; "the frontal line forms the central front of trousers, and is named the central front of gravitation;" the weight must be suspended "from the waistband, so that it must terminate on the instep," a fact assured by experiments, whenever experiments "could be presumed to be made," &c. &c. &c. And is not this somewhat conclusive and a little provocative of gentle feminine retaliation?

KING'S COMBE.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

AFTER having escaped, for more than half a century, the universal scribbling mania, I fall a victim to it at the age of sixty-five—old enough to know better, most people would say.

I hear all around me, from men and women, young and old, people with brains and people without, much talk of the degeneracy of the age; what fine fellows we were in our grandfathers' time; how even our earlier ancestors would have looked with scorn upon such a dwindled, feeble, over-civilised set as we have become. At such a time the experience of a man whose leading idea this was, may be of general interest: it is this thought that impels me to make my first attempt at authorship.

My friend was not one of those men who let an idea cling to their heels all their lives, or smoulder in their brains at great risk to themselves and annoyance to their friends; he was a man of action; a man of brains and muscle; a powerful-armed, clear-headed, strong-willed Englishman.

He was born at King's Combe, the old home of his family; his mother died when he was seven years old, after entreating his father to watch over and train their boy carefully. This the squire in all sincerity swore to do.

So, within a month he put the urchin, who was already the terror of the servants, on a skittish pony, and told him to stick on. The boy clung sturdily to his steed for two fields, when the artful little beast, by an unexpected swerve, succeeded in throwing him; upon this, the squire picked up his son and heir, and gave him a whipping, took him home and sent him to bed. The next day the boy demanded to be set on the pony again, and asked for a whip; the animal ran away with him, after trying

everything in his power to dislodge the little creature who stuck like a limpet to his back. Not a bit daunted, young Combe, finding that he could not stop him, beat him with might and main; and even when, tired out, the pony would fain have trotted on quietly, his plucky little rider, with clenched teeth and puckered brow, whipped him and kicked him until the animal knew he was mastered; indeed the child administered the punishment with such good will, that the squire himself took him off—to spare the pony.

After this, when Squire Combe found that his son took his fences without the encouragement of a horse-whipping, he relaxed his vigilance; and as the boy's obstinate temper and indomitable pluck developed, and he mastered every horse, hound, and hedge in the county, his father was thoroughly satisfied with his fulfilment of his promise.

But one day, when young Combe was twelve years old, it suddenly turned out that he could not read. Shocked at this flaw in his system, the squire instantly sent him off to the old rector for a lesson in spelling; and engaged the reverend man to furnish his son with as much general knowledge as could be crammed into him in two hours a day, whenever there was no meet of fox-hounds, or other necessary interruption to his studies. So his education continued until he was nearly twenty, when he all at once demanded to be sent to college. His father, never very open-handed, demurred at the expense, and told him that he was better educated than any Combe had been before him. But Percy had made up his mind. So a tutor was engaged to prepare the young man as quickly as he might, spurred on by the bullying of father and son.

Young Combe was no fool, and, his will once exerted, he conquered Greek and Latin as he had done hedges and ditches. But once at Oxford, he went back to his old love, and it was there I met him, at the head of the wildest, boldest set in the university. I was a good shot in those days, but Combe beat me hollow; he was a very fair oarsman, and at riding, driving, leaping, and walking, not a man could come near him.

"Scoffing Combe" and "Cruel Combe" he was called, for he had neither reverence nor mercy.

He was twice rusticated for acts of wild audacity; ran into debt pretty deeply, and while waiting for the result of a bold

avowal of his difficulties, which he had written to his father, he received the news that the squire was dead. So, at the age of twenty-four, Percy Combe found himself the possessor of nearly half Lubshire, and of more ready money than he or anyone else had given the old squire credit for possessing.

With a fixed idea of the degeneracy and effeminacy of the human race, the young squire did not occupy himself in devising plans for the reformation of the whole, but began setting to rights that portion of it which was under his immediate care.

He had ridden and hunted over the county until he knew every corner of it, and the state of every field; to the horror of the old Tory tenants, this professed ultra-Conservative began a severe weeding of the farmers—a regular Radical uprooting of some of the "oldest inhabitants."

"Do they think I'll spare them because they have spoiled the land longer than their neighbours? No, turn the dogs out, to make room for better men."

So they went; and better men—or better farmers—took their places. To men who "knew clay from sand," as the new squire said, the land was let on easy terms; only—they must spare the foxes.

There was a pack of hounds kept at King's Combe once more; the late squire had given it up on account of the expense; and my friend began to look out for a wife.

Combe was the richest and the handsomest man in the county, and the stories of his cruelty did not deter the Lubshire maidens from smiling their sweetest smiles, and showing off their prettiest airs and graces, in the hope of captivating him. But Combe stood fire like a veteran; he was no more afraid of an army of coquettes than of a swarm of gnats; he ran the gauntlet of all the brightest eyes within fifty miles, until he found what he wanted—a handsome, high-bred, high-spirited woman, with fortune and a pedigree; a will of her own, too, they said; but the squire had expected that.

"I've broken in a few thoroughbreds," said he.

And there is no reason to think that his boast was premature. They had six children, and then Margaret Combe died. People said he killed her, but Combe was not a favourite with the rustics.

The eldest child, a girl now ten years old, he sent away to school, saying, "Margaret was hard enough to stand a little

polishing." His five boys he kept with him, that he might train them himself "to be men, and none of your modern milk-sops!"

I paid my first visit to King's Combe when the eldest, Rutherford, was fifteen; and a bolder, harder set of wild young rascals I never met. The squire had to offer an immense salary to induce any tutor of ability, such as he wanted, to trust himself in the midst of such a crew; and the learned man who had been bold enough to accept the post would have been all but devoured, but for the protection vouchsafed him by the eldest son.

Rutherford was like his father, big, fair, and strong, with a steady, sullen courage that bore down all before him. He would take his brothers, and pitch them quietly out of window if they annoyed him; so the younger Combes felt for him a deep respect.

Concerning these little rascals, my chief care was to keep out of their way. They were neither brainless nor effeminate certainly; but, though not over-particular, I felt doubts as to the result of the squire's training.

"A little rough just now," said he to me; "but wait and see, they will be fine men."

When I next went to King's Combe it was late in the hunting-season, five years afterwards.

The three elder boys were at Harrow; and Dick and Bertie, having no one else to distract their attention, fought with each other, and left the rest of the household in comparative peace. These rough boys disgusted me, and we regarded each other with silent animosity.

One night, however, at about two o'clock, I was suddenly awakened by a noise in my dressing-room, which had no outlet except through my room; the window looked over the stable-yard, and one of the out-buildings was close under it. I listened: without doubt there was someone getting in by the window. I rose quietly, and taking my revolver, which always lay by my bedside, peeped through the chink of the door. Yes, there was the thief, just bringing his last leg over the window-sill. I threw open the door, and, pointing my revolver, shouted "Who's there?"

"Stop, you old fool!" was the courteous reply.

It could be no other than one of my host's sons. So I put down my weapon,

and, striking a match, discovered Dick Combe, in impromptu attire, with a contemptuous grin on his face.

"What are you doing in my room, sir, at this time of night? Isn't one safe from your tricks even in bed?"

"Why didn't you stop there then? You might have known it was only one of our larks. But, I say, major, how about your sleeping with one eye open now? I'll swear they were both shut when I passed through your room!" said the boy, his eyes gleaming with mischief.

"Passed through my room, you young rascal!"

"Why, yes; to get out. You don't suppose I've been passing the night in the stable-yard?"

"Then, what the——"

"Oh fie, major! There, don't kick up a row. My room's over yours, you know; I heard your horse kicking and whining, so I thought I'd go and see if the brute was comfortable; and I came down the shortest way, you see. One eye open! Oh Lord! Which one was it, major?" and, with a diabolical laugh, Dick wrenched himself from my grasp, blew out my candle, and fled.

My visitor departed, I could only stifle a rising anathema, and stumble pensively back to bed. This was a kind act; the first I had ever heard of among the cruel Combes; for it was to relieve, not his own horse, but mine, that Dick had turned out of bed. Thinking of them, for the first time, not as young savages to be carefully avoided, it did strike me that the squire's system was rather an awful kind of training, which, in its process of strengthening, repressed all gentler feelings so carefully. What would be the result of turning five strong, hard, utterly selfish young giants loose upon the world? For the first time I gave a little of my pity to the giants.

The next day I listened with more interest than usual to the squire's talk about his sons.

"They will be ready for harness soon, now; Rutherford too, major; I'll have none of them loafing. I'll give them each one start—it is enough for a thoroughbred—set them all off in their race with time, the world, or whatever you call it; and then—devil take the hindmost!"

"But won't you give them a canter first, Combe? They are so young."

"Young! ay, and sound; and it is such should do the work of the world. No good comes of letting young fellows idle

away half-a-dozen years or so looking about 'em; running into debt; coming down to the old home once in a way for a few spare hundreds or a day with the hounds; picking up a little French philosophy and a little English blackguardism, and calling it knowledge of the world! No, that only comes by fighting it; and my boys, major, my boys have pluck and sinew; they will make a good fight, and—they'll win!"

There was the force of a brave heart and an iron will in the squire's words.

Time went on, and each, at the age of twenty-one, got his start. Rutherford chose to be a merchant, and thrived; the others, although the squire allowed them their choice, followed the suggestions he gave them. He got a place in the Tintacks Office for Percy, the third. People told him he was throwing his clever son away; but the squire only said:

"Percy will get on wherever he may be."

It was respectfully hinted that a place of this kind would have been better for James, the second son, than the City, for which he was destined (James was a passive, surly giant, of the fairy-tale type); whereat the squire grew stolid.

"There's no taint of genius, your modern genius, in the Combe blood. You don't suppose I want Jim to develop a talent for prospectus-making, and to outcheat the shoddyocracy itself! But the boy, lout as he looks, will make his way. Never mind the brains; he's got the stuff of a man in him, see if that won't pull him through."

And it did; Jim got on, to the surprise of students of physiognomy, and at five-and-twenty was accounted a rising man.

"As for Dick, he hasn't brains enough for anything but the army, major," said the squire to me. And into the army Dick went. Cuthbert was not yet provided for. It was nearly two years after Dick's start when I met the squire in town one glorious autumn morning.

"What! you here, squire? And at this time of the year?"

"Yes, come up to have a crow over the chimney-pots, and to see how yellow you are all looking. Hang me if I've seen a decent-looking face except my own since I've been in London! and your villainous soot and smoke so begrime the looking-glass, that it was all I could do to recognise that. As for you, you're as bent as a witch and as withered as a piece of

parchment; but then, poor fellow, what can you expect in this hole? Come down to us for the hunting; I'm going to give all my boys a gallop, and we shall have a capital season. Come and see them. I told you they would open the oyster, major—beg your pardon, colonel—and, by Jove, so they have. Come you must!"

I was very glad to accept the invitation, and, at the beginning of the season, two days before a breakfast and meet at King's Combe, I got down there late in the afternoon, just five years ago.

At the door of the station stood a dog-cart, with a powerful bay mare rearing and plunging, a groom trying to hold her head, and a handsome boy of nineteen or so, unknown to me by face, but swearing in the well-known Combe style, holding the reins.

"Ah, colonel, how d'ye do? Haven't got a hand to spare with this brute, but I'll have her steady in a minute."

But an old cavalry officer knows how to cut a knot of this kind; I put my hand on the rail of the cart, and was up in a minute by the side of this off-hand charioteer. He gave me an approving nod.

"All right, William!"

And off we went at a good pace. When the mare had at last steadied a bit at the foot of a steep hill, my companion favoured me with a few comments on the scenery, which is as pretty round King's Combe as anywhere in England.

"That's the five-bar where Tom Seymour broke his leg last summer. There's the hahs that always weeds the field, colonel. Best covert in Lubshire that to the right. Good hunting country—plenty of 'stiffish fences, and an awkward brook or two. That over yonder, two fields beyond the turnips, is the jump of the country," said he, pointing to a leap which even at this distance looked impracticable. A wide brook at the end of a clayey field, then a bank surrounded by a tall, close hedge; and, as my guide informed me, a deep drop on to loose soil on the other side.

"There are only two men I know who can take that without making their wills," said young Combe, coolly; "the squire, and Rutherford the rider (that's Rutherford, nicknamed so by us when we were little chaps), can do it on Lady Betty, and even the squire doesn't take it now except when he is in very good form. As for the

rest of us, we know better than to try! But I forgot, colonel; you know all about the country; you were here before I was put into knickerbockers."

I assured him that what he said was new to me, and he rattled on discursively until we reached the lodge, where the gate was opened like magic by a frightened little girl, and we dashed through the long avenue up to the door.

The squire and Miss Margaret had not yet returned, the butler said, so I was taken up to my room, the same that I had had before.

I did not know whether the redoubtable Dick still occupied the room overhead, but there was someone there in boots and a passion; a couple of dogs were barking and yelping in the yard below, to the accompaniment of a deep voice, as of an idle man amusing himself at their expense; and my friend of the dog-cart was cracking hunting-whips in the hall, and whistling like Boreas. The taint of effeminacy, so dreaded by the squire, was evidently as far from King's Combe as ever.

The cracking ceased, and the thundering overhead was succeeded by a heavy tread down the stairs, before I left my room and made for the drawing-room.

The prospect of an hour or so in the society of five young men of different degrees of sulkiness, and a strong mutual combativeness, did not please me; from old association I felt very much as if about to enter a den of lions. As I went downstairs I saw standing in front of the huge fire in the hall a gentleman, young and well-dressed; the sight was very welcome, for he was not tall enough for a Combe, though erect and well-built; and his hair was dark, while they were fair. As I reached the last stair he turned and—he was Combe to the core! He came forward with the air of a well-behaved prince, and said, bowing: "Sir George, I am afraid you do not recognise one of your old tormentors; I am Percy Combe."

I had scarcely time to wonder how the rough, pert boy had been transformed into the courteous, well-bred man, for he led me at once to the drawing-room, and I stood once more in the presence of all the "cruel Combes." The change had not been so great in all of these. The handsome, sullen-looking giant who bore down upon me first was unmistakably

"the rider," with an imposing look of passive strength in face and form. I never liked Rutherford; his face wanted animation to carry off the cruel expression.

But could the indolent exquisite, well-built enough to practise the fashionable lounge without looking as if he were falling to pieces, with hair parted in the middle, and a dainty camellia in his button-hole, be "sulky Jim?" How could the squire put up with it? But a dandy of six feet two, broad in proportion, commands respect; Squire Combe probably knew that the diamond ring would in no wise cripple his son's hand if his own rights were infringed.

"Awfully cold you must have found it, driving," said he. And then my old friend "Dare-devil Dick" came forward. He was the one in whom I took the most interest, and I shook hands with him heartily. He was a good-looking young fellow of two or three and twenty, tall, slight and fair, with gray eyes; there was an honesty in his face still that attracted me; but instead of the bright, straight-forward look of old days, he wore a shamefaced expression which I did not like to see. He seemed to be in the famous "Combe sulks." He edged out of the group, and my charioteer was formally introduced to me as Cuthbert, whom I had not much noticed during my last visit, but whom I remembered, at the age of six, getting under the table to operate upon my boots with a pair of champagne-tweezers.

"I can't think what is keeping my father, Sir George," said Rutherford; "he will be much annoyed that he was not here to receive you."

And then began a discussion of hunting prospects, in which all took part except Dick, who threw in an occasional interjection from a corner of the room, where he was reading, with the air of one to whom this was an unaccustomed and tedious occupation.

My favourite Dick was the only one in whom the old surliness remained unchanged. Was the squire's plan the right one, after all, for turning out model English gentlemen? and how was it that Dick was the only exception? A follower of my profession too; I wanted to draw him into conversation.

"Well, Dick, and how do you like the army?"

He looked up, as black as thunder.

"Jolly, by Jove!" was his laconic answer.

Rutherford dropped his newspaper, and Percy asked me if I had seen that article in the "Saturday," on "Serene Simpletons," evidently to turn the conversation. Then he led me into the next room to see a new picture of a favourite horse.

"The squire had it taken last spring," said he; "the old horse has carried him well, and will carry him yet; by-the-bye, you won't find him in quite such good spirits as usual, I am afraid, Sir George. The fact is, he has had a disappointment. Dick has made a mess of it; got into debt, and will have to sell out. The squire is not used to having his plans upset, you know; and his favourite plan is that his boys shall succeed in life. It was a mistake to put Dick into the army; a soldier wants backbone as much as anybody, as you know, colonel."

Poor Dick! No wonder he was surly. It was not a pleasant thing to be the first failure of a man like the squire. I was silent for a minute, and then we heard the crunching of wheels on the gravel; the squire had returned.

Percy had been romancing a little, in order to bring in the subject of Dick's delinquencies neatly; Squire Combe was just the same as ever, but at dinner he did not speak to Dick. Margaret Combe was a handsome, well-bred, fair woman, not far short of thirty; more strikingly like her father than any of them. Her long white hand could control a horse almost as well as any of her brothers; but there was not a trace of the "fast young lady" about Margaret. Yet I did not wonder that she had never married when I saw the cold way in which she followed the squire's lead by ignoring unlucky Dick. I had felt great surprise, and even a kind of disappointment, at my five typical vagabonds having turned out so like other people. I had judged too soon. As the dinner went on, and the first slight restraint of my presence wore away, the old influence of their home began to work; and by the time Margaret left the room the Combe stamp was visible enough. Dick, who had been eating his dinner crestfallen and almost in silence, gave signs of returning animation by muttered comments on his eldest brother's remarks; and at last, when Rutherford made a statement about the condition of the fields, he flatly contradicted him. His father

turned his head sharply, and spoke to the scapegrace for the first time.

"Dick, hold your tongue."

The squire was absolute still. Dick was quiet, but I heard him swear under his moustache.

Presently the squire asked me to come and have a cigar in his study; and there, with each an arm-chair by the big, comfortable fire, we began to talk about "the boys;" the squire, in his brave old Roman way, adverting at once to Dick, the failure.

"It was too much to suppose that the old proverb would not hold good about the one black sheep in every flock," said he. "I believe I might have known it was Dick who was the fool. Percy has got it into his head that the army did for him, but one road to the devil is as short as another for a lad who wishes to go that way. Dick had his warning like the others."

The squire disposed of his son's destiny in his usual firm, clear tones. I was shocked, and heartily sorry for the poor lad—the old story of the world's sympathy with a ne'er-do-weel.

"But, squire, he is so young. He'll do yet. He has got the Combe pluck as much as any of them; there is not a bolder rider, a more fearless fellow in England than 'Dare-devil Dick.'"

The squire looked at me with his blue eyes keen and animated.

"Bold! Aye, he'd not be a Combe if he couldn't ride. But, colonel, do you think I wanted my boys to do nothing better than smash through a hedge or manage a thoroughbred? Dick would have made an excellent whip; but unfortunately he's a Combe and a gentleman. For me to own him my son, a lad must be neither fool nor craven. A man with ordinary brains—and Dick has brains—is a fool to race and bet, and risk three times the money he has to lose. Dick's a fool; so he may go his own way, and be hanged to him!"

This was more than I could stand.

"Squire, you're wrong. Dick is no old man before his time; but he has an honest look in his face which would become some of his brothers. I believe he is worth all the rest of them put together."

But the squire only answered good-humouredly:

"Ah, George, you always had a weakness for open country." Then he changed the subject. "But there is one thing troubles

me about my boys—they don't marry. It is not as if they would have any trouble about it; there's the very girl to hand—Lord Dereham's daughter. You know him—Dereham Hall? Heiress, good hunting country; fine, handsome girl, rides to hounds, takes her fences with the best of them. Well, they won't have a word to say to her. Not that I mind for Rutherford; he is shrewd, and will do well in marriage, as in everything else. But there's Dick. It would have been the saving of Dick; but he flung away that chance like the rest. Then there's Jim. A clever woman like that would have towed him through the world without any trouble, supplying brains and everything; just what would have suited him. But no, though he would give her a lead, mangle a joke for her amusement, swear at her groom for her—if she needed that; now he must needs neglect her for a little insignificant chit without nerve or money—our new parson's daughter—reads Tennyson and screams at sight of a spider. I forbade him to think of her at first, but now I suppose I must put up with it to settle him. As for Percy, I think he looks still higher than Lady Ethel. The beggar's clever—how he came by it the Lord knows! When they were all running wild here together it was Percy who had to make peace with irate farmers, or persuade a bumpkin whom they had knocked down that he felt rather the better for it than otherwise. Whipper-snapper as he was among four bullying boys, with fists like sledge-hammers, he never came to grief. He's not a thorough Combe—Percy has wires instead of sinews. I put him in the Tintacks because I thought he would have nothing to do there. When I was young, people said and believed that 'Satan found some mischief still for idle hands to do;' but now the rogues are the busy bees. And the City might have sharpened his faculties, as it has done those of many another indifferent honest fellow. But Percy won't rust in the Tintacks. I shouldn't be surprised if he were leader-writer to some Radical paper."

The shrewd old squire was not far wrong. I went upstairs, admiring the clear-headedness and penetration of my vigorous friend. But, as it turned out, there were some things which escaped even the lynx-eyes of Squire Combe.

A NIGHT WITH JAPANESE FIREMEN.

SOME four years ago we, the foreign community of Yokohama, Japan, were being continually burnt out during the winter months; and as for the native community, very few of them could boast of having kept a house intact for much more than six months. It was generally the same story—recklessness and carelessness on the part of the natives, the almost universal use of inflammable kerosene oil, the trumpery style of domestic architecture in vogue, and the utterly inadequate means possessed both by European and native settlements to prevent the spread of a fire.

It is true we had, in the European settlement, two splendid London-made steam fire-engines and an American machine, highly polished, painted, and decked with bells and lanterns, whilst throughout the Japanese town were scattered stations with squirts, ladders, and poles; but as there were no organised brigades to work the splendid engines, they rotted away in their sheds whilst property was being destroyed and lives risked, and the native squirts were rather worse than useless in the tremendous conflagrations to which we were becoming accustomed.

We used to talk the question of fire defence over at our dinner-tables, but nothing came of these conversations beyond a unanimous condemnation of everything and everybody connected with the municipal government of the settlement; so we remained contented to see houses destroyed on all sides of us, and rarely expressed surprise when the boom of the fire-bells hurried us away from dinner, to "assist" at the bonfire of some neighbour's goods and chattels.

We were talking the matter over more seriously than usual one evening—inasmuch as during the night before the "hong" next door had been completely gutted by fire, and our own pretty fairly damaged by falling bricks and streams of water—when a servant entered and whispered to me that there was a "number one Japanese typan" waiting to see one of us in the hall.

I went out, and was presented to a fine old fellow, clad in the superior bourgeois style, who announced himself as the captain of one of the Yedo fire-brigades. Coming so apropos as the visit did, we asked the old man in, and after humiliating himself for several minutes, à la mode Japonaise,

by sidling slowly towards us, and taking in audibly deep draughts of our tobacco-laden atmosphere, he consented to sit down, take a glass of sherry, and tell us his errand. He had heard, he said, that we were very uncomfortable about the frequent occurrence of fires in the settlement, and the utterly helpless condition we were in for lack of organisation; and he had come to suggest the formation of a native brigade of firemen, to be modelled on the system of Yedo—the city of fires par excellence—to co-operate with our own volunteers. In furtherance of this scheme, he wished that one or all of us should pay him a visit at his station in Yedo, to observe the working of his brigade, and to utilise such hints as we should pick up. This the old fellow brought out after a profuse expenditure of polite phrases and apologies, adding that, although he feared we might sneer at the primitive Yedo method of conducting these things, he imagined that, perhaps, we might pick up a useful hint or two.

Three of us accordingly went by train the next evening to Yedo, and were met at the terminus by our old friend with a dozen stalwart coolies, who shouldered our luggage, and preceded us to the fire-station, where we found the guard for the night drawn up in military order to receive us, clad in full costume, armed with hooks and axes, and looking smart and business-like.

Hospitality is one of the most pleasant characteristics of the Japanese nation, and ere we were allowed to inspect or view anything connected with the brigade, we were invited to a sumptuous banquet in the private house of the captain. Although we were warned that at any moment the alarm might sound, we made ourselves very comfortable for three hours on the soft white mats of the captain's state apartment, partaking of constant relays of fish, flesh, fruit, vegetables, sweets, and wine, and waited on by deft damsels clad in the brightest holiday attire. Then we lighted our cigars, and the captain, who by this time had got into full uniform—helmet curiously wrought, thick doubly quilted jacket and leggings, belt and fire-hook—proposed to show us over the station.

Probably, it had been put into good order on account of our visit, for I have oftentimes called at Japanese fire-stations, have found the guard asleep or gambling, the engine in a corner, apparently anything but fit for action, and the various hooks, ladders, and appliances heaped all over the

place in the direst confusion. At this special station, however, everything was in spick-and-span order. The engine itself—a bronze ornamented box, something like a tea-chest, with a squirt arrangement protruding from the middle, slung on to a stout pole—stood in readiness; the guard of the evening—looking very like the monks in Foxe's Book of Martyrs, their hoods covering their faces, with the exception of the eyes—were drawn up in line at the gate; outside, two huge lanterns inscribed with the divisional letter swung in the wind, and reflected the bronze ornamentation on the triangular pile of pails, and the carefully-burnished metal work of the hooks and ladders; while, up and down in front of the station, his eyes and ears all attention, paced a fireman, whose sole duty it was, at the first distant boom of a bell, or at the first faint redness of the sky, to run up a ladder placed perpendicularly in the ground to a height of some fifty feet, and to hammer away at the bell thereto attached. Every detail of organisation was most courteously explained to us by the captain, who seemed to take immense pride in the appearance of his station, and who rated in pretty severe terms one of the watch who wore his fire-hook suspended on the wrong side, and threatened expulsion to a second, who was indulging covertly in a whiff of tobacco. We stood chatting outside the station for some time, when snow began to fall, and a keen driving wind set in, which rendered motionless smoking anything but agreeable. The captain, observing this, rubbed his hands with something very akin to glee on his face, and remarked that as we were pretty sure to see something in the course of the night, we might as well turn in, drink a cup of hot saki, and make ourselves as comfortable as possible. So we went in, drank our steaming wine—very like hot negus, and not at all a bad nightcap—coiled ourselves up in our quilts, and, as we heard the wind dashing against the shutters, devoutly wished that, for a few hours at any rate, we might not be disturbed.

Apparently we had slept a very rapid forty winks, when we were awakened by a tremendous hullabaloo. To our confused senses, wandering as they were between the land of dreams and the land of stern actualities, everything seemed to have gone mad. We could see lanterns like fireflies fitting past the half-opened shutters, whilst demoniacal howls and shrieks seemed to be mixed up in one wild

chorus. So we jumped up, rubbed our eyes, and ran into the engine-house, where we found the captain, in full costume—helmet and plumes, jacket emblazoned with the brigade monogram, and thickly-padded leggings—already on pony-back, commanding, gesticulating, and shouting to the brigade men assembled in full force. Seeing us he cried: "The fire is near the Atagoyama. The wind is blowing full in from the bay, and if the flames don't spread over the crowded quarter close by, it will be the work of the gods. Come on, English friends, and see how the Yedo firemen can work!" So out we went, in rear of the engine-men, the hook and ladder gang, the lantern-bearers, the pailmen, and the battering-ram coolies, into the street, where a howling, rushing crowd almost swamped us in our exit.

Over the house-tops we could see the broad lurid glare, and through the driving snow we raced together with other brigades, all howling and laughing like madmen, everyone apparently treating the whole concern as if it were an excellent joke, and not a matter perhaps of life and death.

Long before we arrived we could perceive that the fire was one of no ordinary magnitude, for we met streams of shrieking, terrified old men, women, and children, laden with screens, bedding, shutters, clothes, and domestic utensils, flying for refuge anywhere away from the fire. Now and then, at a point where two streets met, a fire-brigade, dashing along at headlong speed, would tear through the ranks of these unfortunates, tumbling them over and scattering far and wide the Lares and Penates so barely rescued from the flames. But this was no time for sympathy. We rushed on, mixed with other fire-companies, and just as we were beginning to feel the effects of a sharp trot, after a heavy meal and a very hurried repose, arrived at the scene of action.

It was a big fire—there was no doubt about it. In Constantinople and New York, fairly big events of this sort occasionally occur, and are made much of; but to see King Fire in all his awful power and glory, Japan should be visited. Although we had been pretty prompt in obeying the alarm-bell, we found that the fire had already made considerable progress, and at first, unprotected as we were by helmets or hoods, we found it difficult even to look at the raging scene before us. All we could make out was a vast expanse of

dancing flame, intersected by jets of smoke, and the black outlines of burnt or burning buildings. By degrees we became accustomed, and we saw our brigade double up into action, place the engine in position, squirt at the flames, which seemed to have the most undisputed mastery everywhere, and send forward the hook and ladder men—dare-devil fellows, who seemed to have the utmost contempt for flames and falling timber, and who went into the danger as if they were going to a wedding. To us, accustomed to the stern, silent, business-like manner of the London firemen, there was something savouring of burlesque in the efforts of these Yedo brigades to combat the flames. The general effect was that of what is known as a pantomime "rally"—everyone howling, shouting, running to and fro, and upsetting one another amidst a shower of beams, tiles, and articles of furniture, without any apparent order or method. There was a great deal of movement and a great deal of uproar, and during the whole performance the flames seemed to wander just where they pleased, singeing here, blistering there, but as a rule completely gutting what they came in contact with.

Meanwhile our engine had come to utter grief. But this, to our eyes, was of very little consequence, as it had served simply to damp the jackets of the firemen; so it was removed, and all the energies of the brigade were devoted to the object of preventing the spread of the fire by the wholesale demolition of houses. With this object in view the hook and ladder men were sent forward into the houses which were more immediately threatened with destruction, whilst the battering-rams—huge piles of wood with tremendous iron forks at the ends—were run up under the charge of the most stalwart coolies of the brigade. The captain, armed with a huge standard, was sitting straddle-legged on the roof of a house, and by his movements those of the brigade were directed. Until he retreated not a man dared to dream of yielding an inch, and we trembled for the safety of our fine old friend as we saw him apparently alone in a blaze of flame, or half hidden in the dense volumes of smoke, which rose from the burning masses on all sides of him.

And here we may remark that although the discipline of the brigades, their methods of procedure, and their total unbusiness-like air of doing everything,

were to be condemned in toto, too high praise cannot be bestowed on the individual pluck and agility of the members. We in Europe are now familiar with the extraordinary feats of Japanese acrobats, but to see this skill and agility put to a practical use one should "assist" at a Yedo fire. When the word is given for the hook and ladder men to go into action, it is a treat to see some score of muscular, active-limbed young fellows, not one of whom pauses a moment to look at the danger into which he is going headlong, dash into the houses already tottering to their fall, swarm on the roofs, swing from rafter to rafter, struggle up almost perpendicular slopes of loose tiles—often with a rope in their mouths—jump over yawning chasms of flame as if they were two-foot ditches, fasten the grapnels to the blazing timbers, jump down and signal an "all right" to a gang of coolies below, who are hanging on to the chain or rope. The wall totters backwards and forwards for a minute, but extra mettle is put into a final pull, and down comes the whole blazing side of a house, burying half-a-dozen firemen, sending up a huge pillar of smoke and sparks to the sky, and calling forth a tremendous yell from the admiring crowd. Scarcely has it fallen when a dozen active fellows are hard at work with their fire-hooks. From under one heap of timbers jump out two or three of the hook and ladder men, who rub their bruises and laugh frantically. Out of a cavern of smouldering ashes crawls another, with an arm broken; whilst from the innermost recesses are pulled out two or three poor blackened, mutilated remains of what were a few minutes back rollicking dare-devils in the prime and strength of manhood. These last are gently carried off on shutters, and to-morrow will be followed to their last resting-place under the cryptomerias and azaleas on the hill-side yonder, by a crowd of relations and comrades, proud in the midst of their sorrow of the deaths met with in the public cause.

So interested and excited had we been by the extraordinary scene, that we had entirely forgotten our own selves, and by degrees we became sensible of the fact that we were over the ankles in snow slush, that whilst our faces were being scorched and blistered by the reflected heat of the fire, the wind and snow had formed a frozen coating on our backs. Apparently the fire would burn itself out unless the wind

should suddenly change, for, notwithstanding the pluck and activity of the firemen, the insufficient means at their disposal for fighting the flames, and their general want of strict discipline, were powerful allies of the enemy. The captain, standing out against the fiery background like a weird statue, still cheered and exhorted his men from the very precarious roof of a temple; the men, drenched to the skin, scorched and bruised, half worn out with continuous hewing, hauling, and clambering, still kept up the fight, retreating only as their leader retreated and howling like fiends as every house fell in, but it was of little avail. The flames did what they liked, and all efforts to stop their progress seemed powerless, so, wishing that we could transport to the scene of action a couple of steam fire-engines and some of Captain Shaw's boys to work them, we prepared to turn back to the station and finish our sleep. We were elbowing our way through the mob, when we heard a tremendous cheer—totally distinct from any of the wild howls we had listened to during the evening—a well-organised, solid British cheer, breathing beef, beer, and pluck; we stopped short, made our way to the front again, and were just in time to see a body of blue-jackets rush through the crowd, knocking over obstructives right and left, and dragging a real London-made steam fire-engine. It was like a dream to see such a sight in the heart of Yedo, and we at first imagined that they were sailors from the Japanese ships of war in the harbour, but their method of going to work disabused our minds of this notion. In very few seconds the great machine was brought to a standstill, the hose run out, and streams of water playing on the burning street, which in five minutes equalled in torrent the whole amount of water thrown during the evening by the native squirts. We then learnt that the blue-jackets were from one of her Majesty's surveying-vessels then at anchor in the bay, and that the steam fire-engine was one which had been bought by the corporation—or whatever the governing body is termed—of Yedo, some years back, when the fit for buying up in all directions every article of European origin was at its height, and which had been neglected in a shed close by the railway station ever since its arrival.

The flames were a little intimidated by their new foe, but the wind was a faithful

ally, and the officer in charge of the blue-jackets saw that no amount of water would check the spread of the fire. Besides, Jack at a fire in Japan is like a schoolboy let loose for a holiday, and there is not much fun in squirting with a hose at a safe distance; so, yielding to the generally expressed wish, the officer ordered the engine to be withdrawn, and sent the blue-jackets into the flames. I don't say that they exceeded the natives in pluck and skill, but their thorough unalloyed enjoyment of being able to go in anywhere and back as they pleased, with their keen ship's axes, led them into the most extraordinary freaks of foolhardiness that can be imagined. They were simply everywhere—tumbling over one another in their eagerness to get to an especially hot part, sliding about slippery roofs, smashing at every smashable object to be seen, without arguing for a moment whether they were doing any good, heaving furniture out of the windows, cheering, laughing, and chaffing one another without intermission.

Still the fire progressed, and the officer thinking that his men had had a good ten minutes' fun, called a council of petty officers to take serious measures. It was proposed to blow up a house or two, and thus create a gap over which the flames could not leap; the Japanese authorities were consulted, and, Japanese-like, demurred at first to such a proceeding, as being not only an innovation, but as tending rather to lower their own prestige. However, the point was gained, at a whistle the tars reappeared from various parts of the fire—singcd, bruised, panting, and ragged—everyone was cleared away from the scene of action, the powder distributed in a couple of tea-houses as yet intact, and for the first time during the evening, nothing was heard but the howling of the wind and the crackle of the flames. They soon reached the devoted houses, there was a big puff, a blinding shower of sparks, a vision of falling timbers in a red atmosphere, and when all had subsided, a neat square gap was seen, at which the flames stopped short. So by the exercise of common sense, and the employment of a little powder, a catastrophe, which probably would have terminated only with the limits of the city, was averted. The fire was over, the blue-jackets formed and marched off to a lively chorus, the greater part of the mob melted away to bed and gossip, and we returned to the station.

We did not rally the captain upon the fact that, after all, his big fire had been stopped by foreigners, for we saw he was mortified, and that he felt himself humiliated in our eyes; but we complimented him heartily on his own pluck and that of his men; and the old man, when we arrived, divested himself of his battered helmet, his saturated, singcd, and tattered uniform, and soon joined us in a well-earned cup of saki, previous to turning in to rest.

So ended our experiences with the Yedo firemen. On our return to Yokohama, we set to work at once, called a public meeting, sent round a subscription list, and in a few days had four good volunteer brigades in working order; so that, after all, our night at Yedo was not without beneficial results.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VIII. NOËMI'S SECOND OFFER.

It may sometimes take half a lifetime to eat a mouthful of cold fowl. The length of the operation depends entirely on what is in one's mind at the time.

Walter Gordon had, of course, heard of the caliph, who, in the moment's space between dipping his head under water, and bringing it out again, lived through not half a lifetime, but the whole of it, from the cradle to the grave; in short, through the entire circle of existence that is epitomised under three short heads in the first column of the supplement of *The Times*. He thought that Clari was eating in remarkable silence, even for her in one of her rare silent moods; no doubt she was hungry, but the use of the teeth did not, with her, hinder the use of the tongue. If he had thought of the story of the caliph, he would have found the key. But how could he, even then, in the interval between the cutting of a morsel of fowl, and its entering her lips, have read the story of Noëmi Baruc, as it acted itself in the air before her? Words take time to read, as well as to write—vivid memories outrace lightning, and know nothing of time or order.

Even while she saw herself munching nuts, and making postures before the mirror in the loft of bric-à-brac, she was also standing in a corner of the Corso among the thick of the Carnival crowd;

and the horses ran, and the moccili gleamed like glowworms in the dark; and the flowers and the sugar-plums rained, and the diamonds flashed in the broad sun, all at once together. At the same instant of time, she was singing for a pair of visionary earrings in the shadow of the Colosseum under the moon—she was bargaining with Prosper for francs, and with her master for the purse of Fortunatus, and the empire of the world. And, not after all this, but together with it, she was—nursing a child.

It is to be feared that her master, when he married her out of hand, by way of artistic necessity, and to keep off the impresario-flies, did not take into account certain other accidents of marriage. But such accidents will happen—especially when they are least wanted. Intent upon giving the world the end of a great work, the means he had taken to ensure it had as yet only given it the beginning of another woman. Merely the beginning of one as yet—a baby in the guise of a chrysalis, with a very little face and prodigiously large brown eyes. It was, as a matter of course, swathed round as tightly and stiffly with linen bands as grown-up children are with circumstance; and its great brown eyes stared with almost grown-up wonder to find the world about it so very queer. It was a very poor substitute for the great work indeed.

The lessons had to stop, for beyond a certain point nature flatly refuses to submit to the severest system that the greatest philosopher—nay, that the greatest fool—has ever made. And suppose Noëmi was to take it into her head to turn into that most hopelessly inartistic of all creatures—a mother? The maestro knew little of such matters from experience, but he knew, theoretically, all about the maternal instinct, and how apt it is to override every other. He had never been able to conquer that unconfessed distrust of Noëmi that had driven him to marry her as the only sure means of binding her safe, in the teeth of temptation. But here was a traitor in the very citadel, whose strength was not to be measured by its present size. From all the perils of the world, the flesh, and Prosper, he had securely caged her; but against a baby—what in the name of art was he to do?

And what, in the name of nature, was Noëmi to do with a baby? She had scarcely ever touched such a thing, since she first touched herself with her own

baby-fingers, in immemorial time. No such being had ever found its way in with the sunbeams that used for an hour a day to creep through the barred windows of Il Purgatorio, who would most surely have kept against it a debtor's account for board and lodging, at compound interest, from its first birthday, and turned a penny out of its very mother's milk, somehow. Infants, otherwise than in law, were too wise to visit that special house in the Ghetto. What was Noëmi to do with such a thing?

She could love it.

And, somehow, that came to her more easily than even singing.

But as she sat and nursed her bambina at the end of its seventh week, the look on her face was as little like such a common thing as mothers' love as can well be conceived. For that matter, it was not such a look as a man would like to see in his wife's face, whether she were a mother or no. It was more like the hunger of love, than love of the sort that a woman gives either to a man or to a child. That Noëmi Baruc from the Ghetto had at last found her human soul was clear—but it looked little enough like a soul that was worth the finding.

Now it so happened that Prosper, in his search for a new star, had been disappointed bitterly. More than that, he had discovered that he had been grossly and shamefully taken in; and that wounded his amour propre, both as a Frenchman and as an impresario. Never had he been driven to admit such a thing to himself in all his life before. And by a girl, too, who had not even the right to a débutante's knowledge of business—and by a composer, forsooth, and not even a famous one; by a man whom an impresario regards as much his proper prey as a sparrowhawk regards a sparrow! And by an English composer—a nondescript kind of creature hardly to be recognised in the operatic world, while Waterloo was still something more than a forgotten tradition, and men believed in the story of Cambronne and the Old Guard! Greater than Cambronne, Prosper would neither die nor surrender; and he was bound to retrieve his dishonour. It had not been hard for him to learn that the English musician was no more married to the beautiful Jewess than she was married to him, Prosper. When the Englishman had declared himself her husband he had distinctly lied—

"Like an Englishman," said Prosper. "Perfide Albion! The idea of that ape being married to that angel! But no man shall say that he has twice made a fool of Prosper; no, if it costs me six thousand francs a week, no. She would be cheap at seven thousand; and she only asks for five."

Prosper knew his business; and not even amour propre would have had a word to say had he not honestly believed that his newly-discovered star was of the very first magnitude. And, though *Il Purgatorio*, for reasons of his own, had not set the police on the traces of the stolen mantilla, still they were not quite so blind as Andrew Gordon had assumed. An ugly, dwarfish man cannot travel in company with a beautiful girl wholly unobserved—when it does not occur to him that non-observation is a purchasable commodity. That season at Moscow, and elsewhere, slipped by with no new star; but Prosper held to his purpose as if he had been a bull-dog of British breed, whose teeth are within a hair's-breadth of meeting in somebody's muscle. He set out once more as *avant-courier* of the next season, crossed the Alps once more, and set himself, like both bull-dog and bloodhound, on the trail of his star.

He had run her to earth months before, and had taken care, at slight expense, to keep himself informed of where she was to be found. And now, even while she was brooding over the seven weeks' old *bambina*, he was moving along the street in her direction, and thinking of her. If much thought of a person creates sympathy even at a distance, she also ought to be thinking of him—and that was by no means impossible. For the bird in the bush of art still seemed as far away as ever; diamonds had not yet rained from those sublime skies of which her husband preached, and where he himself seemed to gather nothing but wool. True, the *bambina* had fallen from them.

At any rate her "Come in!" in answer to a tap at the door, was replied to by the re-entry of Monsieur Prosper in person. She started rather eagerly at the sight of him, and he started too, for an imperceptible moment, when his eyes fell on the *bambina*. But there was not even the shade of a moment between the start and a shrug and a smile.

"Am I too vain to hope the *signorina* remembers me?"

"I remember you very well," said Noëmi.

Prosper's face glowed. There was something in her voice, as well as in her face, that he had not found there last season. Even an impresario may recognise a soul in another, though he may have none of his own. It is part of his profession to recognise souls. They have a high market value in proportion to their rarity. He did not see the soul in question, though it was lying in the woman's lap before him plain to see, but heard it in her voice and saw it in her eyes.

"Ah! And you have not become famous yet? That is strange. But you were right, *mademoiselle*; you were right to wait for—for something."

"Famous yet!" repeated Noëmi, with such utter scorn in her voice that Prosper was startled—for more than a moment this time.

"*Signorina*?"

"How should one be famous, or anything else, when one has to wait till one is old?"

"The *signorina* will never be old."

"I am not *signorina*. I am *signora*."

"Ah?"

"And the worse for me! I wish I had taken your one thousand francs, your five hundred—fifty, even."

"Fifty! I offer you fifty! Never, *mademoiselle*."

"I am not *mademoiselle*. I am *madame*."

"But why should you wait till you are old?"

"Because, *Corpo di Bacco*! I am to sing in a great opera—so great—so great that it will take twenty years to compose."

"Twenty years to compose an opera? Impossible, *mademoiselle*. Why I, Prosper, could compose one in twenty days. Twenty years—only to compose! How long will it take to perform, then? Who is it composes an opera in twenty years?"

"My husband."

"Ah! But pardon me; is it necessary you should wait twenty years for your *début*? Twenty years is much in a woman's life, be she ever so charming. She grows fat, or she grows thin. And twenty years of salary——"

"I do not sing for money—I sing for Art—*Corpo d'un Cane*!"

"For Art? I do not understand, *mademoiselle*. You mean you are an amateur?"

The girl was a Roman Jewess, be it remembered, with diamonds in her heart, and her heart on her tongue; reticence is not a southern virtue.

"I mean I am to wait twenty years, till I am ugly and old, before I sing some stupid swine-music that will make people put their fingers in their ears. That is Art, signor."

"What horror! And monsieur—what a man!"

"He loves his swine-music; he does not even love the bambina." And she bent her whole self over the child in one moment's caress, so that it was wonderful the little human chrysalis did not snap in two. "Yes, he went over the world to find someone whom he might break into singing his opera. And he found me."

"You mean he is keeping you for his opera? And for twenty years? It ought to be a fine work, mademoiselle, when it comes."

"It is hideous, monsieur—music to make one creep and shudder, like hearing them grind a saw. He brought it to me yesterday. 'Now,' he said, 'let me hear you sing. This is to be your glory and mine.' Ah, if you could only see it, monsieur—just one bar! But I sang, for I can sing, and I saw the light come into his face as I had never seen it before. And then I said, 'The time has come, then?' Think, monsieur, that was what I was waiting for; the stage and the lights and the flowers, and to hear myself singing the hearts out of people's mouths and the francs out of their purses. 'When am I to sing this? And our fortune begins?'"

"And he——"

"He said, 'In twenty years you will be at your best; I shall take care to finish this in just twenty years.' Believe it, monsieur, I am to wait twenty years till I am old, and then he says that the people will hate his work for years, and perhaps not find it out till we are dead and gone—but that it is all for Art. That is what Art means, monsieur. I thought it meant diamonds for the bambina when she is a young girl, and it means—it means—to be the slave of a craze, and to starve."

"What infamy!"

"Indeed, infamy!"

"Ah, I comprehend—I am not a fool. You are charming. You sing like an angel," said Prosper, enthusiasm mounting his climax like a ladder. "You would make nine thousand francs a week—ten thousand. You are ambitious; you have fire; you have soul, mademoiselle. You throw yourself away on an imbecile—on a——"

"Monsieur, my husband is a great

man," said Noëmi, simply, and with inconsistent pride after all her scorn.

"Mademoiselle, I said it—a great fool. Ah, I know him! I have known a man in Vienna who went without a meal for one whole day because he would not write what he did not like—as if the art of arts were not the art of living, mademoiselle! Were we born to starve? One hundred thousand thunders, no!" Enthusiasm had reached the highest rung.

At least it seemed so. But there was yet one more.

"I will marry you myself, mademoiselle. I, Prosper!"

It was true passion—truer, maybe, than love knows aught of. Every impresario, like every astronomer, glories in finding a new star; but if he can save her salary, or rather pay it into his own pocket, then he is in the impresario's heaven, where stars shine as cheaply as the diamonds of astronomy.

Noëmi shrugged her shoulders. "I am married—to Art," she said bitterly.

Prosper had as much imagination as an impresario. And therefore he understood Noëmi skindeep, but that thoroughly. She must be really married, after all—no chain but the very strongest could suffice to chain one in whom he began to suspect the soul of a caged but untamed tigress, hungry for diamonds. And in that case he could not save her salary in the way he proposed. But there are more ways of killing a dog than hanging him—more ways of getting a prima donna for nothing than marrying her. The Italian style is to engage her at a high figure, and then to abscond on the eve of pay-day. But that, in other countries, is esteemed sharp practice, and Prosper was no rogue. It simply occurred to him that, when a woman is married to a man who will not let her sing, it is safe to offer her any terms she asks, and then, when she asks for settlement, to give her any terms one pleases, on the score that a contract made by a married woman without her husband's authority is null and void. It was only an idea, a scrap of legal knowledge—but it might have its value.

"Madame," he said emphatically, "the divinest right of woman is to rebel. What you tell me is an infamy—a horror—a very great pity. Madame. You shall sing this night at the San Gennaro. You shall take the world by storm—by surprise. This night, madame. There is no word like now. I shall hear you—it matters not

how you succeed, but you must have sung in Italy, and the journals will say all you need. Then you shall go to Moscow, and you shall have ten thousand francs a week, madame, and all else that you will."

Noëmi's whole soul came into her eyes—but she said not a word.

For the second time had all her heart's desire come to her in the person of Prosper. A wise man—or woman—may throw away a single chance, but only a fool throws away a second. Every word she had said to Prosper was true. She had followed her master on the road to the glory of the world, and had found, all in one bitter moment, that its goal was martyrdom.

How was she, the poor, uninstructed girl from the Ghetto, with a soul all one carnival maze of desires—unknown love, untried passion, longing for the fulness of life, eagerness for joy—to sympathise with one iota of the ambition of the man who had no thought of wealth, who despised personal fame, who lived and breathed only for the glory of Art which she had only been able to mistranslate into roses and diamonds? No wonder she felt that she had been trapped on the Corso, to be trained for a victim on the altar of an incomprehensible idol. Not an instinct in her but rebelled against the immolation of life, youth, and beauty for the sake of the craze of a man who was scarce so much to her as the father of the bambina, who monopolised all her love because there was no other creature on earth to claim one fibre of her heart. Had he not lured her on, by false pretences, till there only lay before her a life-long sacrifice of her whole all-demanding self to a man who had only married her, as she now knew, to make her subjection more complete and her bondage more sure? Only that morning she had learned what her doom was to be—a Barmecide feast, with a dessert of Dead Sea apples. All the forenoon she had been brooding over the bambina. And now the gate was opened she had only to pass out and be free. A marvellous great longing came upon her to turn the weapons of Art wherewith her master had armed her, his supreme cultivation of her supreme gift, to her own glory—to disappoint his desire even as he had disappointed hers. An eye for an eye was still a tradition in

the Ghetto. Gratitude? She owed him none. What gratitude could she owe to a man who had tricked her into wasting herself for twenty years in order at the end to force music only fit for screech-owls into unwilling and unprofitable ears? She had nothing to thank him for but a fraud.

"Ten thousand francs a week, and all you will," repeated the tempter.

She looked at the bambina. Was she to go without so much as a pair of diamond earrings to her grave? She panted, she hesitated, she did not make up her mind. One cannot make up what is already made. She had no need to say "yes." "Yes" said itself, without words. One day's notice was not much; but Prosper, of all men, knew the need of not letting an iron cool before striking, and plumed himself upon working miracles. He knew the grand secret—promise much and pay little; but let that little be hard cash, paid on the nail. So far as Noëmi was concerned, no miracle was to be performed at all. Such a voice and such an ear, trained by Andrew Gordon, were ready, at three hours' notice, to sing the music of the spheres, let alone the music of any mortal opera, well enough to purchase the praise of all the journals in Italy.

So much for the morning. In the afternoon her master read in the Gazette an announcement of the début of a new soprano at the Theatre San Gennaro—Mademoiselle Clari.

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XIII. MORE NEWS FROM ITALY.

MR. HOUGHTON took Lady George down to dinner; but Jack De Baron sat on her right hand. Next to him was Augusta Mildmay, who had been consigned to his care. Then came Lord George sitting opposite to his host at a round table, with Mrs. Houghton at his right hand. Mr. Mildmay and Miss Hetta Houghton filled up the vacant places. To all this a great deal of attention had been given by the hostess. She had not wished to throw her cousin Jack and Miss Mildmay together. She would probably have said to a confidential friend that "there had been enough of all that." In her way she liked Guss Mildmay; but Guss was not good enough to marry her cousin. Guss herself must know that such a marriage was impossible. She had, on an occasion, said a word or two to Guss upon the subject. She had thought that a little flirtation between Jack and her other friend Lady George might put things right; and she had thought, too, or perhaps felt rather than thought, that Lord George had emancipated himself from the thralldom of his late love rather too quickly. Mary was a dear girl. She was quite prepared to make Mary her friend, being in truth somewhat sick of the ill-humours and disappointments of Guss Mildmay; but it might be as well that Mary should be a little checked in her triumph. She herself had been obliged to put up with old Mr. Houghton. She never for a moment told herself that she had done wrong; but of course she required com-

pensation. When she was manœuvring she never lost sight of her manœuvres. She had had all this in her mind when she made up her little dinner-party. She had had it all in her mind when she arranged the seats. She didn't want to sit next to Jack herself, because Jack would have talked to her to the exclusion of Lord George, so she placed herself between Lord George and Mr. Mildmay. It had been necessary that Mr. Mildmay should take Miss Houghton down to dinner, and therefore she could not separate Guss from Jack De Baron. Anybody who understands dinner-parties will see it all at a glance. But she was convinced that Jack would devote himself to Lady George at his left hand; and so he did.

"Just come up to town, haven't you?" said Jack.

"Only last week."

"This is the nicest time in the year for London, unless you do a deal of hunting; then it's a grind."

"I never hunt at all; Lord George won't let me."

"I wish someone wouldn't let me. It would save me a deal of money, and a great deal of misery. It's all a delusion and a snare. You never get a run nowadays."

"Do you think so? I'd rather hunt than do anything."

"That's because you are not let to do it; the perversity of human nature, you know! The only thing I'm not allowed to do is to marry, and it's the only thing I care for."

"Who prevents it, Captain De Baron?"

"There's a new order come out from the Horse Guards yesterday. No one

under a field-officer is to marry unless he has got two thousand pounds a year."

"Marrying is cheaper than hunting."

"Of course, Lady George, you may buy your horses cheap or dear, and you may do the same with your wives. You may have a cheap wife who doesn't care for dress, and likes to sit at home and read good books."

"That's just what I do."

"But then they're apt to go wrong and get out of order."

"How do you mean? I shan't get out of order, I hope."

"The wheels become rusty, don't you think? and then they won't go as they ought. They scold and turn up their noses. What I want to find is perfect beauty, devoted affection, and fifty thousand pounds."

"How modest you are!"

In all this badinage there was not much to make a rival angry; but Miss Mildmay, who heard a word or two now and then, was angry. He was talking to a pretty woman about marriage and money, and of course that amounted to flirtation. Lord George, on her other hand, now and then said a word to her; but he was never given to saying many words, and his attention was nearly monopolised by his hostess. She had heard the last sentence, and determined to join the conversation.

"If you had the fifty thousand pounds, Captain De Baron," she said, "I think you would manage to do without the beauty and the devoted affection."

"That's ill-natured, Miss Mildmay, though it may be true. Beggars can't be choosers. But you've known me a long time, and I think it's unkind that you should run me down with a new acquaintance. Suppose I was to say something bad of you."

"You can say whatever you please, Captain De Baron."

"There is nothing bad to say, of course, except that you are always down on a poor fellow in distress. Don't you think it's a grand thing to be good-natured, Lady George?"

"Indeed I do. It's almost better than being virtuous."

"Ten to one. I don't see the good of virtue myself. It always makes people stingy, and cross, and ill-mannered. I think one should always promise to do everything that is asked. Nobody would be fool enough to expect you to keep

your word afterwards, and you'd give a lot of pleasure."

"I think promises ought to be kept, Captain De Baron."

"I can't agree to that. That's bondage, and it puts an embargo on the pleasant way of living that I like. I hate all kind of strictness, and duty, and self-denying, and that kind of thing. It's rubbish. Don't you think so?"

"I suppose one has to do one's duty?"

"I don't see it. I never do mine."

"Suppose there were a battle to fight?"

"I should get invalided at once. I made up my mind to that long ago. Fancy the trouble of it. And when they shoot you they don't shoot you dead, but knock half your face away, or something of that sort. Luckily we live in an island, and haven't much fighting to do. If we hadn't lived in an island I should never have gone into the army."

This was not flirting certainly. It was all sheer nonsense—words without any meaning in them. But Mary liked it. She decidedly would not have liked it, had it ever occurred to her that the man was flirting with her. It was the very childishness of the thing that pleased her—the contrast to conversation at Manor Cross, where no childish word was ever spoken. And though she was by no means prepared to flirt with Captain De Baron, still she found in him something of the realisation of her dreams. There was the combination of manliness, playfulness, good looks, and good humour which she had pictured to herself. To sit, well-dressed in a well-lighted room, and have nonsense talked to her, suited her better than a petticoat conclave. And she knew of no harm in it. Her father encouraged her to be gay, and altogether discouraged petticoat conclaves. So she smiled her sweetest on Captain De Baron, and replied to his nonsense with other nonsense, and was satisfied.

But Guss Mildmay was very much dissatisfied, both as to the amusement of the present moment and as to the conduct of Captain De Baron generally. She knew London life well, whereas Lady George did not know it at all; and she considered that this was flirtation. She may have been right in any accusation which she made in her heart against the man, but she was quite wrong in considering Lady George to be a flirt. She had, however, grievances of her own—great grievances. It was not only that the

man was attentive to someone else, but that he was not attentive to her. He and she had had many passages in life together, and he owed it to her at any rate not to appear to neglect her. And then what a stick was that other man on the other side of her—that young woman's husband! During the greater part of dinner she was sitting speechless—not only loverless, but manless. It is not what one suffers that kills one, but what one knows that other people see that one suffers.

There was not very much conversation between Lord George and Mrs. Houghton at dinner. Perhaps she spoke as much to Mr. Mildmay as to him; for she was a good hostess, understanding and performing her duty. But what she did say to him she said very graciously, making allusions to further intimacy between herself and Mary, flattering his vanity by little speeches as to Manor Cross, always seeming to imply that she felt hourly the misfortune of having been forced to decline the honour of such an alliance as had been offered to her. He was, in truth, as innocent as his wife, except in this, that he would not have wished her to hear all that Mrs. Houghton said to him, whereas Mary would have had not the slightest objection to his hearing all the nonsense between her and Captain De Baron.

The ladies sat a long time after dinner, and when they went Mrs. Houghton asked her husband to come up in ten minutes. They did not remain much longer, but during those ten minutes Guss Mildmay said something of her wrongs to her friend, and Lady George heard some news from Miss Houghton. Miss Houghton had got Lady George on to a sofa, and was talking to her about Brotherton and Manor Cross. "So the marquis is coming," she said. "I knew the marquis years ago, when we used to be staying with the De Barons—Adelaide's father and mother. She was alive then, and the marquis used to come over there. So he has married?"

"Yes; an Italian."

"I did not think he would ever marry. It makes a difference to you—does it not?"

"I don't think of such things."

"You will not like him, for he is the very opposite to Lord George."

"I don't know that I shall ever even see him. I don't think he wants to see any of us."

"I daresay not. He used to be very handsome, and very fond of ladies' society

—but, I think, the most selfish human being I ever knew in my life. That is a complaint that years do not cure. He and I were great friends once."

"Did you quarrel?"

"Oh, dear no! I had rather a large fortune of my own, and there was a time in which he was, perhaps, a little in want of money. But they had to build a town on his property in Staffordshire, and you see that did instead."

"Did instead?" said Lady George, altogether in the dark.

"There was suddenly a great increase to his income, and, of course, that altered his view. I am bound to say that he was very explicit. He could be so without suffering himself, or understanding that anyone else would suffer. I tell you because you are one of the family, and would, no doubt, hear it all some day through Adelaide. I had a great escape."

"And he a great misfortune," said Mary, civilly.

"I think he had, to tell you the truth. I am good-tempered, long-suffering, and have a certain grain of sagacity that might have been useful to him. Have you heard about this Italian lady?"

"Only that she is an Italian lady."

"He is about my age. If I remember rightly, there is hardly a month or two between us. She is three or four years older."

"You knew her then?"

"I knew of her. I have been curious enough to enquire, which is, I daresay, more than anybody has done at Manor Cross."

"And is she so old?"

"And a widow. They have been married, you know, over twelve months; nearly two years, I believe."

"Surely not; we heard of it only since our own marriage."

"Exactly; but the marquis was always fond of a little mystery. It was the news of your marriage that made him hint at the possibility of such a thing; and he did not tell the fact till he had made up his mind to come home. I do not know that he has told all now."

"What else is there?"

"She has a baby—a boy." Mary felt that the colour flew to her cheeks; but she knew that it did so, not from any disappointment of her own, not because these tidings were in truth a blow to her, but because others—this lady, for instance—would think that she suffered.

"I am afraid it is so," said Miss Houghton.

"She may have twenty, for what I care," said Mary, recovering herself.

"I think Lord George ought to know."

"Of course I shall tell him what you told me. I am sorry that he is not nice, that's all. I should have liked a brother-in-law whom I could have loved. And I wish he had married an English woman. I think English women are best for English men."

"I think so too. I am afraid you will none of you like the lady. She cannot speak a word of English. Of course you will use my name in telling Lord George. I heard it all from a friend of mine, who is married to one of the Secretaries at the Embassy." Then the gentlemen came in, and Mary began to be in a hurry to get away that she might tell this news to her husband.

In the meantime Guss Mildmay made her complaints, deep but not loud. She and Mrs. Houghton had been very intimate as girls, knew each other's secrets, and understood each other's characters. "Why did you have him to such a party as this?" said Guss.

"I told you he was coming."

"But you didn't tell me about that young woman. You put him next to her on purpose to annoy me."

"That's nonsense. You know as well as I do that nothing can come of it. You must drop it, and you'd better do it at once. You don't want to be known as the girl who is dying for the love of a man she can't marry. That's not your *métier*."

"That's my own affair. If I choose to stick to him, you, at least, ought not to cross me."

"But he won't stick to you. Of course he's my cousin, and I don't see why he's to be supposed never to say a word to anyone else, when it's quite understood that you're not going to have one another. What's the good of being a dog in the manger?"

"Adelaide, you never had any heart!"

"Of course not; or, if I had, I knew how to get the better of so troublesome an appendage. I hate hearing about hearts. If he'd take you to-morrow you wouldn't marry him?"

"Yes, I would."

"I don't believe it. I don't think you'd be so wicked. Where would you live, and how? How long would it be before

you hated each other? Hearts! As if hearts weren't just like anything else, which either you can, or you cannot, afford yourself. Do you think I couldn't go and fall in love to-morrow, and think it the best fun in the world? Of course it's nice to have a fellow like Jack always ready to spoon, and sending one things, and riding with one, and all that. I don't know any young woman in London would like it better than I should. But I can't afford it, my dear, and so I don't do it."

"It seems to me you are going to do it with your old lover?"

"Dear Lord George! I swear it's only to bring Mary down a peg, because she's so proud of her nobleman. And then he is handsome! But, my dear, I've pleased myself. I have got a house over my head, and a carriage to sit in, and servants to wait on me, and I've settled myself. Do you do likewise, and you shall have your Lord George, or Jack De Baron, if he pleases; only don't go too far with him."

"Adelaide," said the other, "I'm not good, but you're downright bad." Mrs. Houghton only laughed, as she got up from her seat to welcome the gentlemen as they entered the room.

Mary, as soon as the door of the brougham had been closed upon her and her husband, began to tell her story. "What do you think Miss Houghton has told me?"

Lord George, of course, could have no thoughts about it, and did not at first very much care what the story might have been. "She says that your brother was married ever so long ago!"

"I don't believe it," said Lord George, suddenly and angrily.

"A year before we were married I mean."

"I don't believe it."

"And she says that they have a son."

"What!"

"That there is a baby, a boy. She has heard it all from some friend of hers at Rome."

"It can't be true."

"She said that I had better tell you. Does it make you unhappy, George?" To this he made no immediate answer. "What can it matter whether he was married two months ago or two years? It does not make me unhappy," as she said this, she locked herself close into his arm.

"Why should he deceive us? That would make me unhappy. If he had

married in a proper way and had a family, here in England, of course I should have been glad. I should have been loyal to him as I am to the others. But if this be true, of course it will make me unhappy. I do not believe it. It is some gossip."

"I could not but tell you."

"It is some jealousy. There was a time when they said that Brotherton meant to marry her."

"What difference could it make to her? Of course we all know that he is married. I hope it won't make you unhappy, George." But Lord George was unhappy, or at any rate was moody, and would talk no more then on that subject, or any other. But in truth the matter rested on his mind all the night.

A CARLIST CHIEF.

IN THREE PARTS. PART I.

"THAT man, my friend, is the famous partisan leader Rosas."

This was in reply to a question which I had addressed to one of General Elio's aides, who was standing by my side on a balcony of the Café de los Leones, overlooking the plaza of Estella. The date was the 4th of November, 1873, the fête-day of Don Carlos; and, in honour of this event, a bull-fight on a small scale was being held in the far-famed Legitimist centre of Navarre.

There was something humorously reckless about the rejoicings which my companions and I had ridden in from the front to witness. Moriones, the then Republican general,* was advancing by Losarcos and Sesma, at the head of sixteen thousand men, and the previous day I had accompanied General Elio, the Carlist commander-in-chief, on a reconnaissance, which he dared not push beyond Allo, Dicastillo, and Barberiu, say ten or twelve miles from Estella itself. The Legitimist forces were absurdly weak when compared with those of the enemy, though the three or four thousand royalist troops would have the advantage of position and some hastily-constructed trenches. Still matters looked anything but encouraging, and if Moriones took it into his head to press forward, he and his men might by chance reach the much-coveted city in time to cut their steaks from the bulls, which were doomed to be sacrificed in the day's sports.

However, the inhabitants, who could plainly hear the occasional firing at the advanced posts, and now and again the echoing boom of a couple of mountain howitzers, appeared to be altogether indifferent to approaching danger, and to be thoroughly bent on loyally fêting their chosen prince and enjoying themselves to the utmost. Who cared for Moriones and his ladrones of *republicanos*? Was not one volunteer soldier for "God, country, and king" worth a dozen *guiris*? And so, whenever the sound of cannon or rifle firing reached the plaza of Estella, *boinas*—Carlist bonnets—were tossed aloft, handkerchiefs waved, and thousands of throats shouted "Viva el Rey."

The plaza of Estella, having a covered way on three of its sides, after the fashion of the piazza of Covent Garden, and on its fourth the façade of the church of St. Juan, was turbulent with movement and sound. The balconies of the brightly-coloured and quaintly-frescoed houses were thronged with spectators, and it was a marvel to me how the airy structures bore the weight and did not give way beneath the excited, gesticulating masses, which were perched in front of every window. Countless fans were opening and shutting and fluttering in the breeze, which sighed gently from the south through a flood of golden sunshine, for November, even in Northern Spain, is not the month familiar to us in England. And the signoras and signoritas who deftly coquetted with this eminently Iberian toy, looked their bravest, gracefully costumed in the black dresses and mantillas which are worn in preference by Spanish women on all great festive gatherings. Nor was there any monotony of colour. For ~~in~~ ^{among} these ~~ebon~~ ^{scarlet} groups were the scarlet *boinas* and laced tunics of the Carlist officers, who, careless of Moriones and his advancing force, were skirmishing actively with the *Pepitas*, the *Juanitas*, and *Rosalias*. One balcony, midway in the piazza to the right, was all ablaze with bright hues—it was that fronting the reception-room of the so-called *palacio*, in which the Pretender had taken up his quarters. In the centre stood the towering form of Don Carlos, clothed in the full splendour of the uniform of a captain-general, and by his side, talking to him with animation, was the Dona Blanca in a semi-military, amazonian riding-dress, her luxuriant brown hair gathered carelessly under a jauntily-worn crimson *boina*, tufted by a drooping gold

* The pronunciamento which made Alfonso king did not take place till the beginning of 1875.

tassel. The flowing robe was caught up and thrown over the left arm, allowing a glimpse to the knee of the bewrinkled, silver-spurred, patent leather cavalry-boot. Close by, her husband, the Infante Don Alfonso, the prince's brother, was chatting with the Duke della Rocca, comptroller of the household, and the remaining space was filled by staff-officers and chamberlains.

The centre of the plaza had been boarded round to the height of five feet; beyond this barrier, were those of the inhabitants who were not fortunate enough to have balconies at their disposal—the peasantry from the neighbouring country and villages, and the soldiers of the two Carlist battalions forming the garrison of the place. There was no gaudily-dressed cuadrilla of mounted picadores, banderilleros, and espadas. In the arena stood a group of volunteers, their striped mantas thrown loosely over the shoulder, and at their head an aide-de-camp of Dorrégarry, his gold aiguillettes glistening in the sun, and a naked rapier in his hand; he was to act the part of espada and give the coup de grâce, while the volunteers were to fill the rôle of banderilleros.

The gate by which the bulls were to enter had just been unbarred, and in a second a young beast bounded forth, furiously lashing his flanks and tossing his head impatiently from side to side. The group immediately scattered, one or two less venturesome than the others, and deeming discretion the better part of valour, even leaping the barrier to fall pell-mell amidst the vociferating, taunting spectators. Their flight was the signal for a roar of "Bravo toro!" and like any human gladiator acknowledging the plaudits of the crowd, whose only desire was to see him killed or maimed, the bull paused in his onward rush and glared to right and left. The business of the aide-de-camp was not yet to commence, and he had retired to the farther extremity of the arena, leaving to the banderilleros the task of exciting the animal to frenzy. But for a moment there was a period of inaction, the banderilleros not seeming to relish their adversary, who unmistakably meant mischief. One, however, stood alone, quietly rolling a cigarette and shrugging his broad shoulders as he glanced contemptuously at his hesitating companions. The crowd now became impatient, the men shaking their clenched fists and shouting themselves hoarse with the cry of "Cobardes!" Still the isolated banderillero manipulated his tobacco, appa-

rently heedless of the clamour, while the others shuffled about nervously, carefully avoiding, however, to decrease their distance from the bull.

"Cobardes! cobardes!" yelled the exasperated spectators, indignant at this cautious mode of proceeding. "Cowards! cowards! What, are you frightened of this poor little beast?"

There may have been two opinions as to his being a poor little beast; for my part, although he was only a novillo or young one, I found him marvellously well grown, and apparently quite equal to the occasion; and so the bulk of the banderilleros seemed to think. But, surely, flesh and blood could not long bear the taunting sarcasms unmoved! Surely the banderilleros who had voluntarily courted danger, that their prowess might be witnessed and approved by countless bright eyes, were not going to yield the field without some semblance of fight. There was a tightening of fajas or waist-girding scarves, there was a movement to right and left, and then, smarting under a final shout of derision, one of the band rushed forward and waved his manta in front of the bull. The beast, for an instant, seemed startled and bewildered—but only for an instant; then lowering his head, he, with a loud bellow of defiance, charged straight at his adversary. The man, instead of making a demi-volte to either side, turned to escape in the same direction the animal was coming, his foot caught in the trailing manta, he battled forward to the ground, and in a moment the bull's horns were prodding furiously at the helpless heap.

"Bravo toro! bravo toro!" yelled the crowd, beside themselves with delight. "Bravo toro! bravo toro!" Ah, that was something worth seeing; that was better than the commencement promised; someone seemed likely to get hurt; and so, after all, the proceedings might afford a little pleasurable excitement! And the toro, encouraged by the plaudits which he evidently accepted as his due, had already sent the manta flying into the air; and, having trampled and prodded the fallen man, from beneath whom the blood was flowing, was now preparing to elevate him in the same fashion. Vainly the unskilled banderilleros gyrate at a distance round the infuriated animal; he was not to be coaxed from the prostrate foe, whose account he seemed bent on settling before dealing with the others.

The clamour had now ceased, for really there appeared to be but little likelihood of escape for the unfortunate man; and desirous as were the spectators of seeing a moderate amount of bloodshed, they had not quite counted on such a culminating episode as one of the performers being killed outright. That was the fate reserved for the bull; the other actors were only expected to take their chance of a moderate amount of mangling. My eyes had wandered with a sickening feeling from the senseless mass which the animal was poking into position for the final toss, and had rested on the isolated banderillero who, with the greatest calmness, had just struck a match and lit the carefully-rolled cigarette. His attention, as yet, had apparently scarcely been arrested by the dangerous position of his comrade. It was evident the others could achieve nothing, and, for some reason or other, I felt that there was the only hope. As my gaze rested upon him, a fleecy white vapour curled from under the black moustache; the manta was taken from the shoulder and shaken out, and a dozen slouching though rapid strides placed him over the fallen man. Then the manta, with a turn of the wrists, enveloped the head and horns of the beast, which backed abruptly to clear itself. But it was of no avail. This was a more cunning adversary than the first; and despite furious jerking, the animal was compelled steadily to retreat. Then the banderillero, executing a demi-volte, glided swiftly backwards, coaxingly trailing the manta and exciting the bull to a succession of charges. It seemed as though every up-thrust of the horns must reach some portion of the new champion's form; but with a leisurely half-turn to right or left—the manta all the while kept flapping before the animal's eyes—the cool and collected banderillero led the enraged beast to the most distant part of the arena, and there he kept him in dangerous play, while the seriously injured man was being removed. It was now that the suppressed emotion of the spectators found vent in shouts of deafening applause, to which the hero of the moment seemed utterly indifferent. Stolidly he continued the hazardous game, puffing the smoke from his lips at each abrupt turn, the heavy immobile features betraying no sign of excitement; and thus he occupied the bull's attention till the other banderilleros had retaken their places in the arena. The

example of the one man had not been without its effect, for those who had hitherto hesitated, now came up boldly to their work; and seeing this, he who had as yet achieved everything gathered his manta, quitted the contest, and strolled quietly away, rolling a fresh cigarette. It was in answer to the question I had put to my companion about this man, that he replied:

"That man, my friend, is the famous partisan leader Rosas."

Again I turned to look at the man whose exploits, even at this early stage of the internecine struggle, had already been trumpeted abroad. He was now leaning, in careless attitude, against the barrier, and I cannot say that after a searching glance I found his appearance prepossessing. The dead, expressionless eyes were shadowed by thick black brows, the mouth was all but concealed under the falling moustache; yet there was a cruel downward cutting at each corner, and the swarthy features generally, in their immobility, were not pleasant to look upon. Not that the face was absolutely ill-looking, but it was a countenance scarcely calculated to awaken sympathy, and one certainly that would more readily kindle to evil passions than kindly feelings. The head was covered by a scarlet, gold-tasselled boina, from beneath which fell the ends of a gandy-coloured kerchief, which tightly bound the closely-cropped hair. A pink-striped shirt, thrown open to display the muscular throat; red trousers, girded at the waist by a blue faja or scarf; and sandals, protecting the otherwise naked feet, completed a not unpicturesque costume. To this must be added the manta of brilliant hues, now draped loosely about the shoulders. Such was Rosas, the partisan chief of Navarre, as I first saw him.

Having introduced the personage with whom I have to deal, it is not necessary that I should describe minutely the varying episodes of the bull-fight, which filled the entire afternoon. Suffice it to say, that four novillos were tortured and maddened, before being finally disposed of by the not-over-dexterous espada. In addition to the grievously mutilated man, who, I afterwards heard, was all but dead, two other banderilleros were tossed and more or less lacerated, to the intense appreciation of the spectators; but so far as Rosas was concerned, he only came to the front when matters looked ugly, or when the uncertain espada re-

quired the doomed animal to be penned into position for the final thrust.

That evening the dinner-party at the *Fonda de Espana* was unusually large, a number of officers having ridden in to offer their respects to the Pretender on the occasion of his fête, and to witness the exhibition which was made its principal attraction. It was very natural that the conversation should be led to the incidents of the bull-fight, a subject on which Spaniards will discourse as eloquently as will sporting Englishmen on the Derby, the Grand National, or the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race. I had observed that though I might not altogether appreciate, as I should do, the "scenes in the circle" which had gladdened the hearts of the people of Estella, yet I could not withhold my admiration for the cool, nonchalant courage displayed by Rosas, about whose appearance, however, there was something I did not like.

"You are right there," exclaimed, from across the table, a captain of the *Guías del Rey*; "he certainly is not prepossessing, and, though I have met him at least a dozen times, and almost intimately, in out-post villages, I never saw him smile. Those dead, dark, heavy eyes, when they do glance on you, are utterly expressionless; besides, he never looks you steadily in the face: his gaze no sooner meets yours than it wanders restlessly away. So far as I am personally concerned, I should not wish to number him among my enemies, neither should I care to count him as a friend."

"He is a *démonio*," hazarded a young lieutenant, sending his cigarette smoke to float in a series of rings above the table.

"That may be," observed a middle-aged commandante, "but then he is just the kind of *démonio* we want in such a struggle as we are waging. Though I am a Spaniard myself, and we have a foreigner at the table, I freely confess that we are not altogether very reliable among ourselves, and not unfrequently those whom we believe devoted to the cause we have espoused are simply engaged in selling us to the opposite party."

Here there were some protesting exclamations, shrugging of shoulders, and great puffing of cigarettes. But the commandante took no notice of the interruption, and continued:

"I say that such a man as Rosas is necessary to such a cause as ours. He is well acquainted with the country in which he works, and should know something of

the people. Friend and foe speak the same language, and a four-hours' march does not divide the Carlist from the Republican force. Well, Moriones is either at Sesma or Losarcos; General Elio is at Barberin, and the king is here. Now it is very reasonable to suppose that many people in Estella and Dicastillo are on intimate terms with some among the inhabitants of Sesma and Losarcos; and as to the peasantry, they are always meeting each other, either in our lines or in the lines of the enemy. This being the case, no one will, I presume, pretend that all manner of influences are not brought into play, and that there is not a vast amount of espionage practised to our prejudice. Rosas is the very man to deal with this evil, and his summary mode of proceeding when he does catch a spy is just the very thing to strike terror, and not encourage others to follow the same calling."

While these observations were being made a newcomer had entered the room, divested himself of his sword, and drawn a chair to the table. Having hastily swallowed his soup and drank a glass of wine, he looked round and said: "Ah, you are talking about Rosas. Well, I have to thank him for the dinner I shall eat to-night."

"How so—how so?"

"I have been sent in to order him to the extreme front at once. Moriones is very restless, and the general is anxious to find out what he means doing; so Rosas and his men are wanted to bag half-a-dozen *guirís*, more or less, for information. By-the-way, I heard of an incident yesterday, at Dicastillo, which, if true, places the *cabecilla's* mode of procedure in a somewhat unpleasant light."

"Tell it to us," was echoed by a dozen voices; and in obedience to the universally expressed wish the officer related what follows.

"Let it be understood," he commenced, "that I am simply repeating the story as it was told to me, though the man from whom I had it, a well-to-do farmer and a staunch Carlist, swore by all the saints that every word was gospel. It appeared he has a cousin serving with the *cabecilla's* *partida*, and from the way he spoke of the irregular leader I should think he held him in great admiration, coupled with a wholesome terror.

"Not a week ago, when Moriones was initiating his forward movement, Rosas, with a score of his men, left our lines to beat up the outlying country towards

Viana, the route by which it was presumed the Republicans would advance. Retracing his steps at night by an out-of-the-way track in the neighbourhood of Sesma, he came suddenly at a turn of the rocky path—you are aware that abarcas (sandals) deaden the footfall—on an individual proceeding in the direction from which the partida had come. The man, apparently a peasant, moved to one side, passing the salutation of 'Good-night, may God go with you'—and continued his way.

"Halt!" cried Rosas; and two of the partida laid hands on the night-walker, just as he was about to spring into a thicket which led down to a deep ravine.

"Who are you, and what are you doing here?" asked the cabecilla, lighting a match, and approaching it to the man's face. 'Ah, it's you, Francisco! We have not met for a long time. I thought you quiet in your home at Viana.'

"Yes, it's me, and you are my old friend Rosas—I have been to Allo about some pigs, and am now returning as I came, the puercos were too dear."

"Ah, the puercos were too dear, were they? Well, better luck next time. It is not often that you and I meet, and as there is a little tavern near here, we'll have a glass of wine for old acquaintance' sake."

"But I want to get home; besides, at this late hour the tavern will be closed."

"Bah, a brief halt by the way cannot make much difference, and as to the tavern being shut, the landlord will open for me, never fear;" and the cabecilla, placing his hand on Francisco's shoulder, forced him, despite his hesitation and unwillingness, to turn back.

"The miserable, isolated inn was soon reached; it stood in a hollow far distant from any other habitation, and, as may be surmised, was silent and in darkness. A blow on the door from the butt-end of a rifle had the desired effect; a shutter was unbolted, and a voice demanded who was there? 'It's I, Rosas.' 'Bueno, bueno,' was the reply, and in a few minutes the cabecilla and his guest, accompanied by two of the partidas, were admitted to the basement room; the remainder of the irregulars grouped themselves round the entrance.

"Some wine having been brought, the landlord was told he would be called if wanted, and as the door closed, Rosas drew up two chairs.

"Come, Francisco!" exclaimed the cabecilla,

filling a couple of glasses and pushing one to his old friend, 'here's to you,' and nodding to each other both drank. Then folding his arms on the table, Rosas leaned and said: 'I can't quite understand forward why you should go all the way to Allo to buy pigs when there are any quantity to be had in the neighbourhood of Viana; besides, you have chosen a strange hour and a roundabout path for your journey home. By-the-way, do you happen to have a pass from the Carlist commandante at Allo?'

"A pass—no, what should I want with a pass? The roads are open, no one stopped me coming, and I did not expect to be stopped going back."

"Well, you see, my good friend, you were mistaken. You know, of course, that I command the partida of Navarre, and that I have to be very particular about people circulating between the lines—"

"Yes, yes, I have heard—but you and I are old comrades, and—"

"And it's for that reason I have asked you to drink a glass of wine to make matters as pleasant as possible. Now see here, amigo mio, I don't believe a word about the pigs; if you expected that I should do so, you must have looked upon me as a puerco myself, and you are too much of a caballero for that. Come, you had better tell the truth, Francisco."

"The truth? I am telling the truth! I swear by all the saints—"

"Hush, don't swear, it would be awkward to add to your sins just now. Well, as you won't make a clean confession I must take the matter into my own hands;" and at a sign from the cabecilla, the two partidas advanced and seized the trembling man, each by a wrist. Then Rosas proceeded to a personal search, turning out the pockets of the pantaloon, unwinding the sash, removing the sandals from the feet, and examining the inner lining of the boina. There was nothing, and he was about to give the thing up when one of the partidas leaned forward and whispered. On hearing what was said, the cabecilla grasped the arm the man had held and tore the wristband from the sleeve. The hem was quickly slit open—a paper fell to the ground. It was at once picked up and carried to the yellow flaring wick.

"Ah, ah, Francisco!" exclaimed Rosas, after carefully spelling over the document, 'it seems I was right not to believe the story about the pigs. Why, you have a

statement here of every Carlist battalion round Estella, the number of men in each, the officers commanding, and Heaven knows what. I am very sorry, amigo mio, that your curiosity should have led you into trouble, but I am sadly afraid this bit of paper will prove your death-warrant.'

"Francisco had become deathly pale, his limbs trembled under him, and at the last words which fell from the cabecilla's lips he sank to his knees, and exclaimed in an agony of supplication:

"For the sake of God! For the Holy Virgin! By our old friendship——"

"But Rosas turned impatiently away and lit a cigarette.

"Then the terrified wretch crawled to the cabecilla's feet, seized his hand, and begged that he would have mercy, that he would not let his men shoot him. That misery, that the direst poverty had driven him in an evil moment to listen to an agent of the Republicans; that as yet he had given them no information; that this was his first visit to the Carlist lines; that he would be the slave of Don Carlos; that he had consins serving with the Legitimists.

"There, there," replied Rosas to the passionate outburst, 'there, get up, amigo mio, I promise that my men shall not shoot you. Come, I thought you made of better stuff, that you had more courage; here, drink your wine;' and he handed him the untouched glass, which rattled against the poor fellow's teeth, as he partially spilled and partially swallowed the contents.

"Then I shall not be shot by your men?"

"No, I have told you so; come, sit down, there is a cigarette. Will you smoke?"

"With an intense sigh of relief, Francisco fell back into a chair. His glass was again refilled, and when the cigarette was finished, another offered. Few words were passed during the next ten minutes—the reprieved man was in a state of nervous excitement, and he drank freely without being asked. At length Rosas leaned forward and placed his hand on Francisco's arm.

"I have promised," said the cabecilla, in quiet measured tones, 'that my men shall not shoot you.'

"Yes, yes, like the good friend that you are."

"Hush, do not interrupt me. It is because I am, as you say, your good friend, that I do not hand you over to them. They

have been marching since daylight by rough roads, and are tired. Their hands tremble, their aim might be unsteady, and you might be made to suffer; and so, amigo mio, I mean to arrange your business myself—I never fail.'

"As Rosas thus calmly and deliberately spoke, the countenance of Francisco changed from an expression of confiding interest to one of horror—his jaw fell, and with it the half-smoked cigarette.

"Ah, ah," croaked he, with a miserable attempt at a chuckle, 'you are joking, ah, ah!'

"Amigo mio, make no mistake, I am in earnest, and mean what I say—I never joke;' and the lustreless, expressionless eyes, of which someone here has spoken, were fixed steadily on the again abject and trembling man.

"But, Rosas," gasped the terror-stricken spy, starting to his feet, 'you will not, dare not do this; ah, ah!' and he laughed recklessly, 'ah, ah!' confess that you only wish to try me, that——"

"My friend, you little know me when you say I dare not. Once more I am in earnest, and if you wish to make your peace with Heaven, you had better do so at once."

"Make my peace with Heaven—how can I, and no priest to hear my confession? Take me to Estella, that I may, at least, be judged."

"Bah, bah! it's useless your wasting words and time. There is no need to trouble a court-martial. Come, take my advice; either say your prayers in yonder corner, or else sit down quietly to a final glass and another cigarette."

"As may be imagined, Francisco did not readily abandon the hope of moving the cabecilla to mercy. He begged and prayed to be allowed to live, he reminded him of many incidents of their boyhood, he promised a considerable sum of money, which he had hid away, and of which no one knew but himself, he entreated for sufficient delay that his wife and child might be sent for, but it was of no avail; the partida chief remained obdurate. At length, growing impatient, the latter said:

"Come, since you will neither pray, smoke, nor drink, we had better finish," and he rose to his feet.

"Francisco, with a bound, was across the room at once, striving to unbar the window which looked out on the back, but he was quickly seized by the two partidas and dragged down.

"'Now this is behaving foolishly,' said Rosas; 'you see you are powerless. Again, will you have another glass and a smoke? Come, I do not wish to be unfriendly; and I should like to see you as comfortable as possible at the last.'

"'Yes, yes,' replied the now thoroughly beaten man, sinking into a chair. 'Yes, give me wine, and plenty of it. And see here,' he continued, with something like a smile hovering at the corners of his mouth, 'see here, since the smoke is to be final, let it be a long one—not a cigarette, but a cigar.'

"The landlord was summoned and desired to replenish the pitcher, and as Rosas possessed nothing but cigarettes he was also told to bring a puro.

"The longest and thickest that you have,' echoed Francisco, despondently.

"And so the wine and cigar were brought, and the cabecilla again resumed his seat fronting Francisco, whose glass he kept continually filled. Under the influence of the liquor the poor wretch grew recklessly humorous, affecting to treat the whole affair as a capital joke, over which he and Rosas would laugh at some future day. But whenever his somewhat unsteady gaze rested on the cold, expressionless face of the cabecilla he seemed at once to realise his position, and instinctively he stopped smoking. Then he would quarrel with the quality of the puro, complaining that he could not get it to burn, and making all kinds of difficulties when endeavouring to relight it. Rosas at length started impatiently to his feet, saying that he really must bring the matter to an end.

"'A compact is a compact,' exclaimed Francisco, in a thick, unsteady voice. 'You have agreed to my smoking a last cigar; if you want me to finish, you had better give me one that will draw. Here, it's out again,' and he leaned swayingly towards the lamp, missing the wick each time he approached it.

"Rosas was now pacing to and fro, halting occasionally to watch the apparently futile efforts of the miserable wretch to rekindle the puro. Suddenly he came to a determination. The revolver was drawn from its leather sheath; a couple of strides of the sandalled feet brought him silently to the back of the doomed man; the muzzle was quickly placed at the nape of the neck; there was a sharp report, and Francisco and his troubles were at an end.

"Such, gentlemen, is the story as I had

it; not absolutely word for word, for the individual who related it to me crowded it with dramatic incident, after the fashion of the Southern Navarrese; and from the minuteness of the details that fell from his lips, I should judge the cousin he alluded to as serving with Rosas was one of the two men present during this terrible tavern episode."

KING'S COMBE.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

THE next morning at breakfast, Jim—the Dandy, as his brothers called him—publicly announced his intention of going to church. I sat next to Percy and murmured, "The little parsoness."

"Keep your eyes open," returned "Clever Combe," oracularly, also under his breath.

I did open them when Rutherford, adding indolently that there was nothing better to do, said that he thought he should go; and Dick said briefly, "So shall I;" and Cuthbert followed suit with a discontented, "Then I suppose I'm booked!"

Of course gentlemanly Percy was going.

I came down for church in good time, but no one was yet ready. Nobody had a prayer-book except Percy, who was dutifully waiting to escort his sister; the servants were running about for books, followed by the expectant worshippers with imprecations; so I started by myself, unnoticed in the general excitement.

The church was not far off; genuinely Norman, with heavy pillars and small windows—a sturdy little building almost hidden by trees. I was very early. Inside the church stood an old man, pulling a couple of knotted ropes, and leaving off from time to time to wipe his face with his handkerchief; and a double row of children in the agonies of catechism. Facing them sat the little parsoness.

She took me by surprise, for she was well-dressed, well-bred, and a beauty. A little brown beauty, quite free from the conventional brunette vivacity—she looked up with a pair of sweet dark eyes, as she drew a couple of heavy little rustics out of my way. I walked meditatively on to the big square Combe pew. What a charming little creature! and what a pity that she should throw herself away upon that great hulking Combe!

I was pleased, as much for his own sake as for his pretty daughter's, to recognise in the rector, as he walked up the aisle, an old college-chum, John Irwin.

I thought he stared from his desk when he saw the whole Combe family file in, but the vigorous nudging and nodding of the yokels was still more expressive.

Dick sat next to me, and Rutherford nearest to the door; and when, as we were all standing up, the little parsoness came softly in and stole into her father's pew in the next aisle, she carried their two pairs of eyes with her, and kept them, with but short intervals, during the whole service.

The Dandy, poor fellow, was seated opposite to me, whence he could not get a glimpse of her without ricking his neck. He turned round devoutly when we stood up, and when the sermon began and that consolation was denied him, he folded his arms and went to sleep, while his sister decorously roused him from time to time with a brass-bound church service.

While we were waiting in the churchyard after service, according to country custom, I hoping for a chance of renewing acquaintance with my old friend, his daughter came out. Rutherford and Dick contented themselves with raising their hats, but James went up and spoke to her. Percy came to me, looking much amused.

"Let me show you a short cut home, Sir George."

"Thank you, I am waiting to shake hands with your pastor, in whom I have recognised an old friend."

"You had better come with me, Sir George; he won't be out for another half-hour. The fact is, Mr. Irwin is a martyr to his principles; he insists that all the rheumatic and infirm brethren, who can't escape him, you know, in his pastoral calls, shall put in an appearance at church on Sunday; so they take it out in religious consolation in the church porch, while his roast mutton is spoiling. A hunting country is fatal to rustic simplicity—the sheep get foxy!"

I took his advice, and walked on with him.

"What do you think of our rural beauty, Sir George? Very picturesquely devout, isn't she?"

I did not much like this cynical tone upon such a subject.

"She is very pretty," I replied, briefly.

"Yes, she is pretty enough to turn the heads of the whole lot of those silly Combes. In fact, she has done great execution already; Rutherford and Dick will settle the Dandy between them, I expect, big as he is."

"The squire seems to have no idea how much mischief 'the little chit' has done?"

"No; isn't it wonderful, what the Lubshire air and friction with Lubshire wits can do for even the squire? He would never suspect Rutherford of such folly; and as for Dick, if the squire gave it a thought, he would say that, being a soldier, he felt bound to fall in love with every pretty face he saw."

"But they seem to let Jim have it all his own way."

"The fact is, colonel, I believe Dick and the Rider are both too hard hit to be noisy; but they can't go on much longer without clashing; they are at daggers drawn already."

"Has the lady no preference?"

"It is dangerous to answer for a lady's heart. Let us say she is making up her mind. Balance the chances: you see it is not exactly a case of Wealth versus Whiskers, for the Rider is not bad-looking; still, Dick has the pull personally, though he is not so tall; then he is a scapegrace, that is in his favour. His nickname, Dare-devil Dick, would do wonders with most women; not, perhaps, with Mary Irwin."

Percy's words implied a compliment, but there was a sneer lurking about his mouth.

"Then you think Rutherford will be the favoured one?"

"Well, since there is really a conversion involved in either case, the little parsoness may reason that it were better worth while to save the soul of the heir!"

"Your suggestions do credit to your ingenuity," said I, rather dryly. Percy's usual good-humoured cynicism seemed to me ill-natured bitterness now that it was applied to that pretty, gentle girl. But his tact was equal to the occasion.

"Indeed, Sir George, it was ill-judged of me to make such suggestions to so chivalrous an old soldier. Put down my ill-nature, if you like, to jealousy. I assure you I felt a great temptation to enter the lists myself at one time; but what could a little whipper-snapper like me hope to do against such an array of bone and muscle as my three big brothers present."

Percy's tone was by no means heart-broken, and I confess that, at the time, I gave little heed to his words.

In the afternoon, I went again to church, and, to my surprise, found Dick already seated in a corner of the pew. He followed

me out, but when I looked round for him at the church-door, he was gone. Determined not to miss my friend Irwin, I strolled about the churchyard, and came to an angle of the wall where an old mouldy tombstone, overhung by a crooked willow-tree, attracted my attention.

While idly stooping down to make out the indistinct inscription, I heard the light sound of a woman's dress a few yards from me, and saw through the branches my pretty Miss Irwin, evidently waiting for her father.

Dear little domestic queen! I could connect "tea getting cold" with the light annoyance in her face, and one pretty little hand impatiently tapped the stone by which she was standing. Her father was coming! For I heard a quick, firm step; he was hurrying, not to say bolting, round the corner to meet his—no, not his daughter, for the newcomer was—Dick Combe! Dick, with the sulkiness melted at last, and the gentlest of gruff voices.

"Mary, my darling!" and, lifting his hat, he bends down and kisses her, yes, kisses my "domestic queen," as reverently as if she were a saint in a window.

I am surprised, I admit it, and captured moreover, for I cannot get out of my corner without disturbing this idyll, or this plot. So I stand and wait.

Mary is gentle and self-possessed, and even now looks quite mistress of the situation.

"I have been waiting five minutes!"

"I could not help it, Mary darling; that confounded old lynx-eyes the squire's got at Combe now came pottering down to church this afternoon, and he's been prowling about ever since we came out. I dodged him round a tombstone, and left him making out an illegible epitaph with his walking-stick."

Did you, my pert young friend?

"Oh hush, Dick!" says my beauty, sweetly.

Dick receives the rebuke with serious submission, and kisses the hand he holds, humbly.

"I'll forgive him! I'd forgive anyone anything now, even the Rider for looking at you! But"—and Dick, with a sigh of remembrance, began to look gloomy again—"I want you to comfort me, my darling; I'm down on my luck, and no mistake, Mary—have to sell out, and the squire's dead against me. Don't think I've been going the pace all this time, Mary," said he, earnestly; "I've been as steady as old

time since you said you'd have me; but the fact is I didn't know then how deep I was. You had better have taken Rutherford, or even Jim, than thrown yourself away on a poor devil like me," said Dick, becoming suddenly bitter, and turning away a few steps to be brought back and comforted.

"Oh, Dick, don't say such things," said Mary, laying the required hand on his big shoulder.

Dick looked at the little hand, and turned round at once, with the most honest of smiles beaming in his fair face.

"So you wear my ring!"

"Yes, always."

"My darling! But what do they say?"

"Oh, you know papa never notices anything, and I could easily satisfy him if he did ask who gave it to me."

Dick beamed.

"Mary, my little darling, whatever made you care for such an uncount brute as I am!"

Then he broke out passionately:

"I can't give you up, Mary, I can't give you up, though I believe I ought. I'll work hard to win you, and, God help me, I'll deserve to take care of you some day! But do write to me, Mary; you know I'd write to you if you would let me; but can't you send me a line now and then? I don't leave them on the table, as you said I should, not even the envelopes. I've got the three little notes I've had from you by heart, long ago: 'My dear Dick, I hope you don't think——'"

Mary put up her hands, laughing softly.

"Oh, hush! You ought to have something better to do!"

Here Dick slid round the tombstone.

"Better to do than thinking of you, Mary; you don't mean that. But, oh yes, I've remembered what I've heard you say about a cultivated mind, and I've taken to reading because I thought you would like it—read *Vanity Fair*, stupid book, but there's a girl in it, Milly, just like you; that is why I finished it. And I've read *Harry Lorrequer*; that's jolly, and you are exactly like Lady Jane! And I read every word in that book of Tennyson's you gave me."

"You took, you mean!"

"Yes; but I don't think I care much for poetry; don't seem to understand it all exactly; but you said you liked criticising books with people—oh, and I like Mary Anne in the Mouldy Grange, because I thought it was like you, sometimes, perhaps, when I'm away."

And again he bent down, wistfully.

She only looked up, and answered, with her demure gentleness: "Yes, indeed, I often think of you when you are away!"

It was a very cool admission, certainly. Dick drew back, wounded; then he said, low and quickly: "Mary, do you care for me as much as you used to do? If you don't, why I—I—I don't mind, you know, but——"

He looked so miserable, so crestfallen, so disappointed, as he moved away, not looking up.

But she did not mean to try him too far. She let him march on until he was brought up short by another tombstone, and then she waded through the rank wet grass after him, put one hand on his shoulder, while she slid the other into his, and lisped out in sweet, tender tones:

"Dick, you know I do."

As he turned, she raised her head, her soft eyes shining with the smile of an enchantress. I could see Combe's lip quiver as he heard her—looked at her. Then his shyness was gone. Looking down on her with all his love and tenderness shining in his honest eyes, he locked her other hand in his and kissed her. Then he burst out, incoherently enough.

"My own, own darling, Heaven knows how I love you, what I would do for you! You are my angel—no, don't stop me, you are my true angel, the only good I have ever known, all the goodness and pureness and truth in the world to me, and God grant I may be worthy of you. I was nothing but a brute without you, and it is only your sweet pity that makes you care for me; but don't leave off, Mary; as long as you care for me I'll fight against the world for you, but if you give me up, I'm a lost man!"

The tones of his young voice were bitterly earnest.

Mary listened with tender eyes.

"Oh, Dick, you know I love you, truly and dearly; don't doubt me again, you dear, silly boy. But now you must let me go; papa will be out and coming to look for me. Good-bye, good-bye, dear Dick!"

"Good-bye, my own gentle darling."

Drawing herself away, Mary ran lightly off, and Dick marched slowly round the corner in the opposite direction.

Not a little interested in this unexpected romance, I slowly left my corner and sauntered round to the church-door. There, wearing perfectly the appearance of having been waiting half an hour, lounged the in-

genuous Dick; but he was not so sulky as before.

"At last, Sir George; I hope you haven't been in mischief; I've been wondering where you'd gone!"

The flagrant hypocrisy of this simple youth shocked me very much; but as I had my own reasons for silence concerning the proceedings of the past ten minutes, I played the hypocrite too.

And then out came the rector. He recognised me at once, and insisted on my going home to tea with them.

"Come you must, we are simple people, and our six-o'clock Sunday tea won't take away your appetite for dinner at eight. Tell the squire I won't keep Sir George long, Richard," said he, turning to Dick, who looked as if he would have liked an invitation too.

Dick said "All right, Mr. Irwin," and marched off, while we took the path to the rectory.

"I won't have that good-for-nothing young fellow, or his swearing brothers, dangling about the house," said my friend, in the judicious-parent tone. "I don't wish to see my Mary married to one of those brutal Combes."

Now I had already enlisted on the other side, so I said:

"Well, Irwin, I think there's something sterling in Dick Combe; and that is saying more for him than it would be for another man, considering the way those boys were brought up."

"No good will ever come of that lad," replied the judicious parent, obstinately; "unless, indeed, it should by the special intervention of Providence," added he, recalling his professional view of the lost sheep.

I had no opportunity to say more, for he talked of other things until we reached the house.

I was introduced to the rector's daughter, who skilfully guided us away from those theological sandbanks, upon which the well-read rector loved to strand his friends.

Then the tea was brought in, and my lady gravely set to work with that subdued clatter which, when well managed, is a great charm of tea-making.

She had just brought me a cup, and the rector, with ominous placidity, was beginning with:

"I was reading yesterday a very curious speculation concerning——" when the door was opened by the maid, who announced:

"Mr. Rutherford Combe!"

The rector looked surprised and annoyed.

But Rutherford was not in the least discomposed by the coolness of his reception; he turned to the rector with stolid unconcern, and said:

"I have to apologise for intruding upon you, Mr. Irwin; but I came to tell Sir George that he need not hurry away, for the squire has gone over to Dereham and dinner will be half an hour later; I came myself that I might bring your overcoat, Sir George, as it will be cold by the time you return."

"I am very much obliged to you, but I never catch cold," replied I rather stiffly. I thought this rather officious of the thick-headed giant. I was not his grandfather, nor so infirm as he seemed to think.

Rutherford remained quite unmoved by my petulance, and turned to go; when Mary made the best amends in her power for us, and asked him to have a cup of tea; he accepted the invitation, and took a seat beside her.

My friend began again upon his discovery of the day before. He soon found that he must have that book to read me some passages. I glanced around for help, but my pretty ally of earlier in the evening was quite engrossed by that big Combe. A light dawned upon me. Perhaps Rutherford's officiousness need not have worried me; perhaps I was only a convenient instrument, whom he had been using as a means of tormenting my pretty little tea-maker. Irwin was by this time full fathom five in his "curious speculations," which he was reading aloud to me; so I took the opportunity of looking at Dick's beautiful lady-love and her stupid persecutor.

She was looking down and listening with sublime patience while the impertinent fellow talked to her in a low voice—surely she could not stand it much longer! No, for she presently looked up; but it was with the very same glance which had done so much execution that afternoon on poor Dick! The rector buzzed quietly on, but I gave him neither eyes nor ears; I watched and—yes, and listened, and wished intensely to punish my fair enchantress by pitching her admirer out of the window.

It was evident that her sweet eyes had again made great havoc; the Rider was looking down at her sullenly.

"Of course you laugh at us rustics, Miss Irwin!"

She looked up with the same provoking sweetness:

"Laugh at you? Oh no, indeed."

Cool Rutherford was losing his head; he growled out savagely:

"It's true you're infernally civil to Dick!"

Mary gave him a glance which was the most beautiful, gentle rebuke, and said with some dignity:

"I have known your brother Richard longer than I have you, Mr. Rutherford."

"And that's why you like him so much better?"

"I did not say that."

"Well say it then; do you?"

He blurted out these words, shortly and sharply, his cold blue eyes flashing with passion.

Mary was calm and gentle, as usual.

"Well—no!"

"Poor Dick, poor Rutherford! What fools! What a little sorceress! The innocent rector looked up, beaming theology:

"So that's quite conclusive, isn't it?"

"Quite," snapped I, rising quickly, and looking at the clock.

"But, my dear Irwin, I've been so interested in—in that—what you've been reading, that we have been forgetting the time."

Rutherford rose, heavy and self-possessed as usual; but his face was still flushed, his eyes were still glittering.

"Mr. Irwin," said he leisurely, "I hope you will come up to King's Combe to-morrow."

"Well, I don't know," began the rector.

Rutherford continued, quietly, "Your friend Mr. Hedley will be there, and——"

"Will he?" interrupted Mr. Irwin. "A very intelligent man, Mr. Hedley; but then, I should not get a chance of a talk with him."

"Easiest thing in the world," replied Rutherford. "You persuade Miss Irwin to bring you up in the pony-carriage, and wait while you get out and have a chat. The meet will be the prettiest thing in the world, and would please your daughter immensely."

Rutherford knew that, intelligent as he was, nothing would induce his friend Hedley to enter into a learned discussion on a hunting morning.

I left the house with young Combe, followed to the gate by the rector, with a parting injunction to study the Reverend Giles Jones on Chinese Speculative Theology.

We walked home almost in silence. I

came down before him into the drawing-room, where the rest were waiting for the squire and dinner. Dick was still beaming; having been twice reproved by his sister for whistling, he was now occupying himself in the less secular amusement of jangling the lustres on the mantelpiece.

The squire returned home in high good-humour, and even threw a word or two to Dick. When Margaret had left the room after dinner, the squire filled his glass, and gazed at it for a few minutes, thoughtfully. Then he looked down to where Dick and Cuthbert were bawling a cheerful discussion across the table.

"Dick," said the squire; and everyone was silent, expectant.

"Dick, I am going to give you another chance."

Dick stared, radiant but puzzled.

"You can't expect to be particular after having thrown away one chance, you know," continued the squire, genially.

"Anything, anything, sir; I'll turn my hand to anything," stammered Dick, eagerly.

"Well, there's the difficulty," said the squire, with imperial jocoseness. "It has more to do with your head than with your hands, Dick!"

Everyone laughed; so did Dick himself, good-humouredly enough.

"You shall be a parson, Dick."

Dick looked up, startled. Everyone was surprised. Cuthbert chuckled, and drank a glass of wine hastily.

"A parson, sir?" said Dick.

"Yes. There's a living near Dereham, place called Dorbridge, wortheight hundred a year; the rector has been past work for years, and can't last much longer. Dereham has promised it to Dick. So don't thank me, boy, for it is all Lady Ethel's doing; it seems she is very High Church, and let me tell you, Dick, she has a fancy for curates."

Dick seemed to be in a maze.

"But, sir, I should never do for a parson; I couldn't preach a sermon to save my life."

"Gammon!" said the squire; "no son of mine but could string together a firstly, secondly, lastly, finally, and in conclusion, with any reverend ass in the country. We won't be particular about your theology; and whether you are High Church, Low Church, or Broad Church, you shall lead us by the nose, as far as our souls are concerned."

"Provided you don't give us more than twenty minutes," said Rutherford.

"And if you'll make it ten, I'll desert my own spiritual adviser in your favour," added Jim.

"Dick has strong lungs and a heavy fist; I should think he would make what is called a powerful preacher," said Percy's clear voice.

While this was going on, I saw Dick's colour change; he hesitated, cleared his throat, and then said hurriedly: "I'm not fit for a parson, squire!"

His father stared; the Dandy put up his eyeglass.

"Conscientious scruples, by Jove!" said Jim.

Then the squire spoke rather cynically: "You'll make a better parson than I thought for, Dick! I didn't think there was a spice of psalm-singing in the family; I suppose you took it in the army. However, I am not afraid that it is radical; so you shall have the run of my stable still, and I'll be bound you'll find time to follow the hounds twice a week at least."

The squire spoke as if the matter was settled; but I had been watching Dick's face, and I saw the Combe look rising there. When the squire had finished, he raised his head and said, steadily:

"It's no use, squire; I'm not fit for it, and—I won't!"

No one moved; insubordination to the squire was unknown; even Percy was shocked. The squire's tanned cheek flushed, his eyes grew brighter; he spoke sharply and firmly, but rather as if correcting a very disobedient child.

"Dick, don't be a fool. When I say a thing is to be done, it is done. You will go into training at once, and be up at Oxford within three months; make the best of your time, and come back and win Lady Ethel before the whim has gone out of her head!"

Dick's face had been growing more and more excited as the squire spoke; when he had finished, the young fellow started up, and pushed back his chair.

"D—— Lady Ethel," cried he, fiercely; "she must choose one of her own pet curates, brought up to the trade. I'll have nothing to do with her!"

We all sat thunderstruck; all but the squire, who had regained perfect self-command when his son lost it. He stood up, erect, firm, like a king.

"Richard, you have lost your head. No son of mine, in his senses, could otherwise have spoken so of a lady. When you are sober or sane again, decide either

to accept the proposal I have made you, or—to go to the deuce your own way. I give you till this time to-morrow to make up—your mind.”

The squire put outting emphasis upon the last words.

“You may go.”

Dick remained standing, as if he had not heard. Percy rose, drew his arm through his, and led him out of the room. The squire then left us by another door. For the first few minutes the three remaining brothers seemed scarcely able to collect their thoughts for speech. Cuthbert spoke first:

“It’s an infernal shame! Why should Dick, of all of us, be thrown away!”

“Shut up, Bertie,” said Rutherford, decisively.

Jim had got back a little of his habitual languid manner.

“Papa is coarse in his way of putting it, but I believe he’s right,” drawled he.

“Of course he is, and Dick’s an ass,” replied Rutherford.

EVENINGS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

WITH the beginning of what, to borrow an expression from the regions of human industry and trade, may be called Nature’s early-closing movement—with the rapidly shortening days, the gradually darkening skies, the fog-oppressed, rain-ridden atmosphere of the last month of the year—there comes the question which, if it is as old as society itself, is always new, both in its difficulties and their attempted solution—how to pass the evening? Purveyors of popular entertainment, and devisers of popular games, strain their ingenuity to combine “attraction and novelty” in the practical replies which they offer. The advertisement columns of the daily press announce the invention of a complete originality in the way of parlour amusement; entrepreneurs and impresarios declare that they have hit upon some variety of semi-histrionic, semi-musical performance, hitherto undreamt of, which is at once highly edifying, infinitely provocative of laughter, and to which the most austere of critics cannot possibly take exception. Some new species of charade, riddle, or picture-puzzle is manufactured—something entirely fresh in the way of anagram, spelling sentence, or arithmetical problem. “Bees” of all kinds buzz around our devoted heads; we are invited to lay

bare our orthographical shortcomings, our neglected geographical and historical education, our ignorance of the rudiments of meteorology, metallurgy, zoology, and chemistry, for the benefit of an amused audience; or the air suddenly becomes murmurous with sounds given forth by all manner of musical instruments, or by voices, musical and unmusical, of every conceivable compass, and we are reminded that the winter season of the local glee club has begun, or that the choral society of our neighbourhood has made out its programme of practice evenings and concert nights. Music and fox-hunting have at least one feature in common—they supply a meeting-ground on which all classes and conditions of men come together as equals; they reduce, in other words, humanity to a common denominator. A musical gathering offers as perfect an instance of pure democracy as the hunting-field; gentlemen and ladies are estimated, not for what they are, but for what they can do.

But terribly scientific as the pursuit and practice of music have in these days become, there are still aspiring spirits whom it does not satisfy as a means of beguiling the winter evenings. Debating societies are almost as plentiful as musical societies. Cogers Hall, the Discussion Forum, the Eleusis Club, are institutions representative of one order of society; there are amateur parliaments of a more select character elsewhere in abundance. The policy of the Earl of Beaconsfield, the vagaries of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, the possibility, the desirability of war, the relative excellence and demerits of Turk and Tartar, are being discussed and declaimed about by a score of local orators from Highgate and Hampstead to Clapham and Sydenham, from Islington to Bayswater; and, as in the capital and its suburbs, so in the remotest districts of the provinces. As the season of the debating clubs is just now commencing, so also is the season of the essay clubs, and of half-a-dozen other different kinds of organisations, established for the improvement and amusement of their members. Add to this the lectures, learned or popular, or both, which are being delivered now in the various institutes scattered over the surface of the land; the operation of the free-library movement, which, one may well be glad to know, gains ground year after year; the addresses on every sort of subject that concerns the moral or physical welfare of

the human race, addresses often illustrated by views, illuminated diagrams, charts, maps; and some idea may be formed of the extent of the scale on which the apparatus and machinery for helping the inhabitants of the United Kingdom to pass the evening profitably and pleasurably are forthcoming.

From a casual survey of the multitudinous opportunities, at the disposal of the inhabitants of the metropolis, for amusing themselves after the shades of night have fallen, it might be thought that the supply was rather in excess of the demand. That such is not the case is to be explained, not only by the enormous increase in the resident population of London, but by the facts that the purely migratory inhabitants of London have risen proportionately in numbers during the last few years, and that the English capital, following in this respect the example of the American capital, and to a certain extent of Paris and St. Petersburg as well, now celebrates what may be called a regular winter season. This season has long been an undoubted fact—witness the increase of the London theatres, and their crowded condition during the winter months; this year it has been in a certain unmistakable manner formally recognised. Of the signs that the polite world is in town, the fact that Italian opera is going on is as generally accepted as that Parliament is sitting. The two Houses of the Legislature will not yet assemble for some months at Westminster. Meanwhile, Mr. Mapleson has inaugurated, and with entire success, the winter reign of Italian opera at Her Majesty's Theatre. The houses before which *Il Trovatore* is played in the month of November, may not be identical in their composition with those which throng to witness it in the month of June. But they are appreciative, enthusiastic, crowded, well-dressed, well-paying houses all the same. The truth is that two rival movements have been of late witnessed in London. It is complained, on the one hand, that the London season is not what it was; that estate agents have on hand eligible mansions, which a few years ago used to be let almost before they were empty; and that families to whom three months at their regular town mansion between April and July were a rite of invariable annual recurrence, now dispense with a town mansion altogether, and spend three weeks in furnished apartments, or a suite of hotel chambers. On the other hand, true as this

lament undoubtedly is, there are certain compensating circumstances to which too little heed is paid. Unless it be from the middle of August to the middle of September, London is now moderately full all the year round. This is a fact which the popularity, the numerical increase and success of the regular winter entertainments, might long have been thought to indicate. It may be considered, in a way, officially certified by the institution of Italian opera during the month of November.

There are other circumstances besides those now mentioned, which explain the demand for evening amusements, elsewhere than by the hearthside of home. Paradoxical though it may seem, the enormous size to which London has grown, the perpetual process of attraction to the capital of fresh human atoms, is not favourable to sociability of the simple, unaffected, old-fashioned kind. The little reunions, where there was small ceremony but much cordiality, and much cementing of real friendship, have to a very large extent disappeared. There are hundreds of families in London who live in a state of comparative isolation, and who find in the periodic visit to the theatre, entertainment, or opera, that harmless excitement, that variation of the monotony of daily life, that fillip to existence which were once found in the unostentatious festivities of domestic life. What holds good in the case of families, is naturally even more true in the case of the thousands of celibates of all ages, who make their home in the city in which they seek their fortunes. There is no reason to suppose, as the pessimist philosophers of society declare, that the genius of domesticity is disappearing from English life. But it is quite certain that English life, in the sense of meaning society, is more ambitious and more costly now than it ever was. In a vast city like London, there are naturally a goodly and a growing number of persons, who may consider that their means are not such as to justify their entering the social competition. They hold aloof, and much of the relaxation that they would have wished to find in the interchange of modest, friendly hospitalities, they find, on such occasions as they leave their homes, in the theatre, the concert-room, the entertainment, or in any other of the thousand and one varieties of popular entertainment which are now forthcoming.

In this gloomy December weather, when the sunshine, if it comes at all, comes late and goes early, it is natural to reflect with

something of regret on the decrease in the old-fashioned modes of friendly social intercourse, which have abounded till lately in the great Sahara of London life, and which no doubt will ultimately reappear in their former force. If a call of friendship be now paid for the first time by one lady on another—the two ladies, let us suppose, being the wives of men associated in the daily business of existence—the lady who takes the initiative intimates on her card that she is “at home” on, let us say, Mondays—the inference being that she is invisible on other days. Presently she will express a hope that she may have the pleasure of seeing her newly-made acquaintance at her “evenings,” and in due course a visiting-card will be received by post, on which Mrs. Blank reminds the world of the fact that she will be “at home” in a more ceremonial manner on five successive Tuesdays, from nine P.M., and that there will be “music.” Of course the principle on which these communications, especially that which has reference to the time of the return morning visit promised, is that Mrs. Blank’s time is occupied to the last available minute, and that it is only possible for her to see her friends by appointment. But the reality is quite the reverse of the supposition, and Mrs. Blank merely endeavours to reproduce faithfully the example of the Hon. Mrs. Dash.

As for Mrs. Blank’s “evenings,” there is no reason why they should not be moderately enjoyable. But the chances are that their routine is of so severely forced a kind, that they can hardly be thought to contribute much to the amusement of those who take advantage of them, and to be barely worth a pilgrimage of four miles and a cab-fare. There is music, there may possibly be a round game or so, into which everyone is pressed, and Mr. Blank sees, no doubt, that everything is correctly done. As for the guests, the male portion of them sigh for the old coat, the slippers, and the smoke before the study fire; while the ladies note what goes on around them, for the purposes of emulation or criticism. Why criticise? it may be asked. Is not this the sort of thing that goes on in the best and highest circles? Are not evening receptions quite as much *de rigueur* as evening dinners? All that need be said in reply is, that what is a social duty and necessity in Belgrave-square, is neither a duty nor a necessity, as it is certainly not an enjoyment, in

Bayswater or in Brompton. Perhaps, if simplicity and reality were a little more in fashion than they are, these evenings at home would be more successful and agreeable, and the explanation of the popularity of evenings abroad would be less far to seek.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANKILLON,

AUTHOR OF “OLYMPIA,” “PEARL AND EMERALD,” &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IX. NOËMI TRANSFORMED.

WE all know, or can imagine, the sinking of the heart, the cold trembling of the limbs, the deafness and blindness that seize upon that unfortunate creature who is called a *débutante*. Stage-fright is the very acme of panic; and few are they who have not at least felt its likeness at some wretched moment in their lives. It is not mere ordinary nervousness; it is not mere absence of such physical courage as a man may force into spasmodic life, when he stands at twelve paces from an enemy pistol to pistol, or even when he wakes some gray morning from a pleasant dream, and remembers that he has an appointment with the hangman. It is setting one’s whole existence, past, present, and future, upon the chance of bringing into sudden sympathy hundreds of hearts which have nothing in common but accidental presence under the same roof; and the chance feels desperate, the hearts are so invisible and the eyes look so much like bricks in a dead wall. One false turn of one’s own eyes may be fatal. One must contrive to be deliberately at one’s best, to forget oneself consciously, to intensify one’s feelings with spurs, and yet keep one’s hand firmly on the curb, to do the work of experience without experience, and to leap to results without beginnings—to bring triumph out of despair.

That is stage-fright—and when Noëmi first stepped on the stage of San Gennaro, she no more felt one shade of it, than if she had been the most hardened of chorus-singers.

The girl who had been thrown straight from the Ghetto into the world, ought, by every conceivable law, to have felt overwhelmed under the flaring light that beat upon her *début*. The moth, when it escapes from its chrysalis shell, ought to be destroyed in the first moment of life by

the sudden transition from darkness to sunshine. But the moth, so far from being destroyed, is not even astonished—nor was Noëmi. The moth would have died in its shell unless released—Noëmi would have withered in the Ghetto. The girl was as absolutely at home in her brand-new atmosphere, as the moth in the untied sunshine. Many are born in rags who never feel their lives because they have no chance of sitting on a throne.

And there was another reason. Thanks to her master, she was already mistress of her art before she set foot on the boards, and her mind had never been confused by hearing other singers. It had never been suggested to her that there was more than one way of singing, and that the right one. She was far too stupid, too ignorant, too much without imagination—except in finance—to keep doubts or nerves, or to question whether there were two ways of which one meant success and another failure. But how about stage conventions, the common forms of acting, and all such arbitrary matters as make talent on a level with ignorance till experience comes in? She knew none of them, not one; she was too stupid to know, in theory, of their necessity. At every step, she flew in the face of convention, and made the youngest chorus-singer aghast with horror. But this ignorant, stupid, unimaginative girl from the Ghetto had one thing in her that made her instincts right even when they seemed wrong. She had no talent, no experience, no knowledge. But in this one matter of stage-song she had what renders all these and their opposites of no more account than straws. For she had genius. And it was based on the rock of a sublime faith in itself. Genius alone would have been enough, with her voice and her beauty; with her mastery of song, it was more than enough; but, joined with unquestioning ignorance, it was supreme.

Her instant triumph was no miracle. Miracle and genius are only words to define what we do not understand, and impossible miracles, out of story-books, are as common as nights and days.

She was revelling in the first free plunge into her element; she forgot even the *bambina* at home. But, suddenly, she was aware of a strange, cold shudder that came over her, and reminded her of what she had felt when, standing on a doorstep in the Corso, the sun had been obscured by the passing of *Il Purgatorio*

and *La Purgatoria*. Without turning her eyes to look, she was conscious of the presence among the audience of one unsympathetic pair of ears that kept her song from reaching his soul. By what instinct does one become conscious of such things without any apparent help from sense? And yet that is one of the most common of miracles; one need not be peculiarly sensitive to recognise the near presence of a cat, or whatever creature is most uncongenial to our comfort. Though we are looking another way, we know when eye rests upon us, and our own turn magnetically.

She knew that her master was bodily in the *Sen Gennaro*, an eye and ear witness to her open defiance and rebellion. She knew, or thought she knew, all that was passing in him. Superstition well-nigh paralysed her. His strong, inflexible will had impressed her from the very outset, and had made her feel in his tyranny something of that force of circumstance against which, under the name of invincible destiny, we know rebellion to be in vain. No doubt the name of *Clari* had not been able to veil, even in the newspaper announcement, the identity of Noëmi Baruc from his dull but all-penetrating eyes, which had seen a *prima donna* in a strange girl who had never sung a note; no doubt he had come to freeze her heart and throat and all the music in them by a spell, that he might keep her the victim of his cruel, dead idol, Art, for ever. For one whole moment she was a nightingale who, in the midst of his song, is aware of a serpent under the bush, and knows that the work of fascination is about to begin.

Can a woman hate a man who overawes and crushes her with a nature outside the comprehension of hers, and holds her under the magic of single purpose and inflexible will? No; no woman ever hates her master; but she can rebel and she can defy him—and the most when she least hates him. I think if Noëmi had failed at that moment she would have become the slave he had tried to make her, and have submitted, with a sort of pride, to the service of the idol for the rest of her days. For this was a duel à la mort, and the winner must win once for all. Perhaps she half-meant to be beaten, and to find her master strong enough to represent destiny. And for that very reason she strove her hardest to conquer. Take this as a rule—the harder a woman fights, the less she hopes or wishes to win.

But how could a pair of dull gray eyes really affect the matter? They were not a basilisk's—only a man's. And how on earth is one to combine into one comprehensible chord the various notes that make up one complete impulse in any woman? There was another instinct upon her; her master was not merely her master, or her tyrant, or her enchanter, but the one man in hundreds upon whom she felt her song was thrown away. Triumph over thousands is no triumph so long as one is left to defy the conqueror. Clari at The Five Adzes was not content with having conquered dukes and princes till she had subjugated an under-gamekeeper in velvetene. Noëmi, at the San Gennaro, had conquered none so long as she had not conquered one—an ambiguous phrase, and, therefore, especially applicable.

In a word, she sang with all her might to conquer, with a deep, unconscious hope in the depth of her heart that all her might would prove in vain. It would be more than glory to conquer all the world but one man in it; that was her womanhood. It would be no glory to conquer all the world save one house-fly; that was also her womanhood. And the double, inconsistent impulse gave her fire.

But still she felt the frown of the dull gray eyes. Not one spark of the fire in her seemed to fall on the heart of the magician. She must have met his eyes unwittingly, they conveyed to her such a freezing sense of baffled scorn. Probably they expressed nothing of the kind; but we always read in faces exactly what we look for in them.

Nevertheless, when the first few moments were over, the mere fact that she was not paralysed, but fired, gave her assurance of victory. Every note she was able to sing under her master's eyes was a broken fetter. At the end of the song she felt—free. She had fought for victory, but achieved what was better even than victory—freedom.

If he could only have been strong enough to conquer! But she was not conscious of such a desire. He had not been strong enough, and there was an end. She had become intoxicated with a whirl that surpassed the ecstasy of the Carnival, for this is from her and of her; lights, flowers, applause and all. She only wanted the diamonds—and they would soon fall in a shower from the pasteboard skies. A singer's début is the commonest affair in the world to audiences and

Prosper, but it is never common to débutantes. And the transformation of Noëmi Baruc into Mademoiselle-Clari was not a mere début. It was self-assertion, triumphant rebellion, the discovery of her true place, the sweeping away of such cobwebs as Art, and musty scores that took twenty years to ripen; the letting in of full sunlight upon life, glory, francs, diamonds—and all for the bambina, only seven weeks old.

How, or why for the bambina? Noëmi was the very last who could have told. But somehow a mother can manage to do all things for her child. The bambina can sanctify selfishness.

And now it was all over, and she had to go home. But the sunlight did not go out with the lamps. How she had gone through the details of the performance no doubt Prosper knew. To her it had been a passion, in which one no more notices details than so many separate waves in the great sea, though the sea is made of them, and would not exist without them. It had not been a picture of everyday life, where equal or proportioned prominence is given alike to faces and furniture, lips and laces, but a mad, misty glory; a Turner, not a—say, Walter Gordon. The whole evening, in sober fact, had been very much like first performances, when a new singer makes a hit before an Italian audience. It was more than Prosper wanted—a mere appearance would have been enough to concoct Italian puffs for outer barbarians. But we have been seeing with her eyes, and the Roman Carnival itself had become a dark background.

Somehow, she found herself in somebody's carriage, she knew not where, watching the passing of the light of the carriage-lanterns over the dark corners of the streets. She had not the imagination that makes pictures out of nothing, but she had eyes to see them when they were made, and received impressions from without, as keenly as most people create them from within themselves. If she had a companion, he must have been intensely provoked by the silence of the new star, and have felt that the planet Venus itself was warmer and nearer. As she drew near home—that is, to the bambina, who had not been in her lap for hours, and indeed had been left to take better care of itself than a seven weeks' old baby is generally able to do—she felt her new-found soul softening strangely. The spell had been broken; the wizard had proved but a

mere powerless, mortal man after all, with merely a man's strength, which, after all, is enough for a woman. She was destined that night to anticipate at least half the moods of Walter Gordon's Clari. Something like remorse for ingratitude, now that it was too late, came over her. After all—and she knew it—to-night; nay, the *bambina* herself would never have been but for the grim young man, who had chosen her from all the world because he thought her the best in it, and had set himself to keep her all for himself with a jealousy that was at once the intensest tyranny and the extremest flattery. In spite of her rebellion, he would feel proud of the results of his art. Of that she felt sure. Her triumph was his, though gained against his will. She had justified his belief in her supremacy. He had heard her sing; and surely all his dry Art-dreams that could satisfy no thirst, had been swept away for ever. She felt, or knew rather, that she had found the straight road to every soul; and, after all, it was souls she had come to conquer, not dull eyes. Yes, he would be proud of her in his heart, though for consistency's sake he might put on an air of extra severity. A new craving for sympathy was growing out of her need of glory. She had no mother to carry her joy to—and joy craves sympathy far more than sorrow, which most people are made strong enough to bear alone, somehow. The *bambina* was too young. There was only her master. And, yes, as soon as she saw the least relaxing in his eyes as she came to him with his triumph, she would come back to him and Art and the *bambina*, and be content with her one full draught of glory and victory and be—a woman. Her conquest had been a greater disappointment to her than she knew; and rather than not be beaten she would surrender her victory.

Is all this inconsistency impossible? Then blackberries are an impossible fruit; and yet the hedges are full of them.

She sighed, hummed the end of an air—it was from the great unwritten opera—and smiled. It was dark in the carriage, so her cavalier, whoever he was, was saved the excursion into the fool's paradise of thinking that either the sigh, or the tune, or the refrain, was for him. Though it was too late at night, she was building a little day-dream. It lasted till it reached home, and after she had said good-night to her disappointed cavalier—if he had power over the *Gazette*, so much the worse for her.

She swept up the stairs, still with her victorious yet eagerly tender smile. Noëmi Baruc had been indeed transformed. She had already pictured the scene that would ensue. Her master would frown sternly, then realise all at once that all this conquest was his, and his very own. She would open her heart, now she had once discovered that she had carried a heart from the Ghetto, as well as a black lace mantilla that did not belong to her. Then the electric spark would fly from the wife to the husband and from the husband to the wife, and for him it would be possible to exist without Art and for her to live without diamonds. Now that she had won her point, she understood that there was yet another and a wider world to conquer. She had already known love—by name. Now, she saw it in full view, though as yet without a name.

She swept into the room where she looked to find her husband writing, for his visit to the theatre meant lost time to be regained, and she knew that no emotion would ever keep the keys or the pen from his hand. She could not accuse him of being less severe to himself than he was to her.

"Andrea!" she burst out, almost before entering, "I——"

What was she going to say? But in any case, there was no use in speaking to a closed pianoforte in an empty room. It was strange that he should not have returned from the theatre, and her eager impulse fell back upon her with a sense of being baffled. There is but just one right moment for any impulse to go straight to its point. However, it mattered little. And meanwhile, she would go and tell all about it to the *bambina*. The poor little thing was used to being woke up at all unseasonable hours, to hear its mother's confidences—hitherto by no means complimentary to its father.

It used to sleep in an old-fashioned cradle with rockers. Noëmi hurried to it, and all her full heart went before her.

But—surely the *bambina* had not gone to the opera? Surely the *bambina*——

But, most surely, the *bambina* was not in its cradle. It was not even in either room. What had happened? Had wings grown on its shoulders while its mother was away, and had it flown?

Even then, however, it must be somewhere. Ah—what was this upon the bed? Only—the black lace mantilla. It had been used to cover the child from the

gnats when it slept—and it must have been carried from the cradle to the bed by hands. Children have been stolen, sometimes—such things had been heard of in the Ghetto. But then, people in the Ghetto did not carry off babies, and leave mantillas of old Spanish lace, valued at the worth of a thousand babies, behind them. Far more likely would they have left the baby, and taken the mantilla.

Noëmi clasped her hands in despair, as a horrible guess crept into her heart. Had she indeed broken the charm, so that, with her first act of rebellion, the demon to whom she had sold her soul, before she had one, was to claim his penalty for a contract broken? Once before she had been Cinderella, and the fairy godmother had come to her in a Carnival domino. Since then she had heard of La Cenerentola; and if her costume (procured at three hours' notice by Prosper) had turned to rags on the spot—— But what had she to do with costumes? Her eyes fell upon a letter, pinned to the cradle.

She could not read much. Her alphabet had been that of notes—musical and financial. But with bitter adaptation to her lack of scholarship the writer had been at the pains to put the whole of it into capital letters; and, for the rest, necessity is the mother of scholarship as well as invention. It was the best reading lesson she had ever had since she first met with her master.

She read:

"I will not waste words. You have chosen the wide gate and the broad way, like the rest of them. You are no more of any use to Art; take your own way, you will have money enough, and pleasure enough, and you will be happy. My waste will be made up—and it is not all waste to have learned from you what the human voice can do. That knowledge will help my work, and I thank you. But I am not going to leave an innocent child—who may inherit her mother's voice; who knows?—to a life such as you will henceforth lead. False to Art, false to Nature, you will not miss her. As for your life, as you have chosen it, I leave you free, you have no husband; and henceforth your nature will never be troubled by me. As to the child, I only take her because it is my simple duty to save her from being the daughter of her mother.—A. G."

* * * * *

"Is it far from here?" asked Clari, laying down her knife and fork, and taking

a large slow sip of her Chambertin. "Can one drive there in one morning?"

"Far?" answered Lord Quorne. "No. Hinchford isn't quite so large as that, mademoiselle. Do you mean to say you've never seen my frames?"

"Ah—the cucumbers. Pardon me, milord. I was thinking I would like to drive to that place—where there is the cathedral, you know. I have not made acquaintance with your lions."

"Deepweald?" asked my lady.

"Yes—I cannot say your English names. I have sung there, I think—years ago. But I did not see the cathedral. I like to see cathedrals—and, *Corpo di Bacco*, I should like to say my prayers."

Walter Gordon just lifted his eyebrows. Her moods were past taking him by surprise, and he was beginning to suspect that some of them were not altogether without purpose, though of what nature he could not fathom.

"It is a Protestant cathedral, Giulia," said the countess. "But I believe there is a Catholic chapel in Deepweald, or Winbury."

"Catholic? Well, it is all the same to me," said the prima donna from the Ghetto, in all sincerity, whose notions of worship were dimly connected with a vision, through a lattice, of a ritual to which mass and service were alike parvenus. "Monsieur Gordon shall drive me to the cathedral. It is fine, they say?"

"You must ask Miss Celia—Miss March—about that," said Walter, anxious to bring his protégée as much into communication as possible with the patroness he hoped to give her. "She lives under its shadow."

"Ah?" said Clari, turning languidly to Celia. "You shall tell me of your cathedral. It interests me. Let me see—your father is organist there? No? And he taught you? *Corpo di Bacco*, he taught you well."

"He taught me all I know," said Celia, proudly.

"Poor Lindenheim!" said Walter. "Its best student was there three years, and says we taught her nothing. I will drive you to Deepweald with pleasure, mademoiselle."

But he did not say so quite so eagerly as he would have volunteered three days ago. Clari frowned, ever so little.

"Yes—well," said Clari, emphatically. "I would like to see your father, mademoiselle. But no. I would only like to hear. He would like to be heard—not

like me, who would like to be seen. My friend," she said lightly to Walter, as they left the table, "so that is your Miss Celia. She is pretty, and she sings. But she says not true. Tell me—you know her. She did not learn of her father. She did not learn of Lindenheim. She learned of Signor Andrew Gordon. Ah, I can say that name. Where is he?"

"Andrew Gordon? My uncle?" exclaimed Walter. "Then you have heard of Andrew Gordon?"

"Yes—I have heard of him; that is his style. Your uncle? Then you know of him? You know him well?"

"His Comus? By heart, mademoiselle. But him? No. He must have died before I could ever have seen him."

"He is dead? Gran Dio!"

"Yes—and the world has lost a great man. To think of your knowing about Comus and my Uncle Andrew!"

"Why not—if he is so great as you say? Do you think I know of nothing but Bellini?"

"You are in love with Celia," said Clari, suddenly, after a pause.

Walter coloured and smiled. "We are very great friends," he said.

"That for your friends!" said Clari, puffing away an imaginary feather. "I know what it is, for a young man to be the friend of a pretty girl. Are we very good friends—you and I?"

"The very best, I hope, mademoiselle."

"And we may be; you are in love, and I am not pretty, nor a girl. I know." She began to sigh, but stopped half way.

"You are beautiful, and you are a woman," said Walter, gallantly.

"I hate compliment; I hate humbug," said Clari, with a whole frown. "I am sick of them. I grow old, I grow ugly. Then goes my voice—and then. But I am rich; it will be good to be my friend."

"I am glad you think Celia March sings well," said Walter, not quite relishing the tone of this mood. Could it be possible that the great prima donna was jealous of a child? For such Celia and Lindenheim was still to him—a child who needed all the help that a man could give her. "I am glad you have heard her. Do you think anything can be done?"

"No."

She spoke with one of her rarest notes of energy. And where was the wonder? It was true that she would not grow younger with the years. It was true that she would have to call in much-despised art to keep her beautiful. It was true that her voice, that men loved to hear, and her face, that they still better loved to see, would lose their music and their gracious lines. And the dying queen looks with no favour upon her in whom she recognises her coming rival, as well armed for conquest as she. Jealousy has few bounds—stage jealousy has none. It was not enough for Apollo to conquer Marsyas without slaying him alive.

And then it was true that when a man and woman are friends, love is not far away. Walter Gordon and Clari were friends, and, with her husband dead, and herself free, might she not have hoped for a little sweetness at last, for the rest of her days? That was a dream, and an unconscious dream. But it did not make her love any better the girl who was born, if justice still lingered on earth, to dethrone her, and who had deprived her of her—friend. For when a frank-faced man loves ever so little, he must put on an impenetrable mask indeed to keep his secret from observant eyes. It was all very well to play the part of brother to Celia March, but Clari knew the world well enough to know what such brotherhood means. She was not to be taken in by the Platonics of Lindenheim.

Celia had come to look for a friend, and had found a foe.

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IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XIV. "ARE WE TO CALL HIM POPENJOY?"

THE news which he had heard did afflict Lord George very much. A day or two after the dinner-party in Berkeley-square he found Mr. Knox, his brother's agent, and learned from him that Miss Houghton's story was substantially true. The marquis had informed his man of business that an heir had been born to him, but he had not communicated the fact to any one of the family! This omission, in such a family, was, to Lord George's thinking, so great a crime on the part of his brother, as to make him doubt whether he could ever again have fraternal relations with a man who so little knew his duty. When Mr. Knox showed him the letter his brow became very black. He did not often forget himself, was not often so carried away by any feeling as to be in danger of doing so. But on this occasion even he was so moved as to be unable to control his words. "An Italian brat? Who is to say how it was born?"

"The marquis, my lord, would not do anything like that," said Mr. Knox, very seriously.

Then Lord George was ashamed of himself, and blushed up to the roots of his hair. He had hardly himself known what he had meant. But he mistrusted an Italian widow, because she was an Italian, and because she was a widow, and he mistrusted the whole connection, because there had been in it none of that honourable openness which should, he

thought, characterise all family doings in such a family as that of the Germans. "I don't know of what kind you mean," he said, shuffling, and knowing that he shuffled. "I don't suppose my brother would do anything really wrong. But it's a blot to the family—a terrible blot."

"She is a lady of good family, a marchese," said Mr. Knox.

"An Italian marchese!" said Lord George, with that infinite contempt which an English nobleman has for foreign nobility not of the highest order.

He had learnt that Miss Houghton's story was true, and was certainly very unhappy. It was not at all that he had pictured to himself the glory of being himself the Marquis of Brotherton after his brother's death; nor was it only the disappointment which he felt as to any possible son of his own, though on that side he did feel the blow. The reflection which perplexed him most was the consciousness that he must quarrel with his brother, and that after such a quarrel he would become nobody in the world. And then, added to this, was the sense of family disgrace. He would have been quite content with his position had he been left master of the house at Manor Cross, even without any of his brother's income wherewith to maintain the house. But now he would only be his wife's husband, the dean's son-in-law, living on their money, and compelled by circumstances to adapt himself to them. He almost thought that, had he known that he would be turned out of Manor Cross, he would not have married. And then, in spite of his disclaimer to Mr. Knox, he was already suspicious of some foul practice. An heir to the title and property,

to all the family honours of the Germaines, had suddenly burst upon him, twelve months, for aught that he knew, two or three years, after the child's birth! Nobody had been informed when the child was born, or in what circumstances, except that the mother was an Italian widow! What evidence, on which an Englishman might rely, could possibly be forthcoming from such a country as Italy! Poor Lord George, who was himself as honest as the sun, was prepared to believe all evil things of people of whom he knew nothing. Should his brother die—and his brother's health was bad—what steps should he take? Would it be for him to accept this Italian brat as the heir to everything, or must he ruin himself by a pernicious lawsuit? Looking forward he saw nothing but family misery and disgrace, and he saw, also, inevitable difficulties, with which he knew himself to be incapable to cope. "It is true," he said to his wife very gloomily, when he first met her after his interview with Mr. Knox.

"What Miss Houghton said? I felt sure it was true, directly she told me."

"I don't know why you should have felt sure, merely on her word, as to a thing so monstrous as this is. You don't seem to see that it concerns yourself."

"No; I don't. It doesn't concern me at all, except as it makes you unhappy." Then there was a pause for a moment, during which she crept close up to him, in a manner that had now become usual with her. "Why do you think I married you?" she said. He was too unhappy to answer her pleasantly, too much touched by her sweetness to answer her unpleasantly; and so he said nothing. "Certainly not with any hope that I might become Marchioness of Brotherton. Whatever may have made me do such a thing, I can assure you that that had nothing to do with it."

"Can't you look forward? Don't you suppose that you may have a son?" Then she buried her face upon his shoulder. "And if so, would it not be better that a child so born should be the heir, than some Italian baby, of whom no one knows anything?"

"If you are unhappy, George, I shall be unhappy. But for myself I will not affect to care anything. I don't want to be a marchioness. I only want to see you without a frown on your brow. To tell the truth, if you didn't mind it, I should

care nothing about your brother and his doings. I would make a joke of this marchese, who, Miss Houghton says, is a puckered-faced old woman. Miss Houghton seems to care a great deal more about it than I do."

"It cannot be a subject for a joke." He was almost angry at the idea of the wife of the head of the family being made a matter of laughter. That she should be reprobated, hated—cursed if necessary—was within the limits of family dignity; but not that she should become a joke to those with whom she had unfortunately connected herself. When he had finished speaking to her she could not but feel that he was displeased. Of course she had her own little share in the general disappointment. But she had striven before him to make nothing of it, in order that he might be quite sure that she had married him—not with any idea to rank or wealth, but for himself alone. She had made light of the family misfortune, in order that he might be relieved. And yet he was angry with her! This was unreasonable. How much had she done for him! Was she not striving every hour of her life to love him, and, at any rate, to comfort him with the conviction that he was loved? Was she not constant in her assurance to herself that her whole life should be devoted to him? And yet he was surly to her, simply because his brother had disgraced himself! When she was left alone she sat down and cried, and then consoled herself by remembering that her father was coming to her.

It had been arranged that the last days of February should be spent by Lord George with his mother and sisters at Cross Hall, and that the dean should run up to town for a week. Lord George went down to Brotherton by a morning train, and the dean came up on the same afternoon. But the going and coming were so fixed that the two men met at the Deanery. Lord George had determined that he would speak fully to the dean respecting his brother. He was always conscious of the dean's low birth, remembering, with some slight discomfort, the stable-keeper and the tallow-chandler; and he was a little inclined to resent what he thought to be a disposition on the part of the dean to domineer. But still the dean was a practical, sagacious man, in whom he could trust; and the assistance of such a friend was necessary to him. Circumstances had bound him to the

dean, and he was a man not prone to bind himself to many men. He wanted and yet feared the confidence of friendship. He lunched with the dean, and then told his story. "You know," he said, "that my brother is married?"

"Of course, we all heard that."

"He was married more than twelve months before he informed us that he was going to be married."

"No!"

"It was so."

"Do you mean, then, that he told you a falsehood?"

"His letter to me was very strange, though I did not think much of it at the time. He said, 'I am to be married,' naming no day."

"That certainly was a falsehood, as, at that time, he was married."

"I do not know that harsh words will do any good."

"Nor I. But it is best, George, that you and I should be quite plain in our words to each other. Placed as he was, and as you were, he was bound to tell you of his marriage as soon as he knew it himself. You had waited till he was between forty and fifty, and, of course, he must feel that what you would do would depend materially upon what he did."

"It didn't at all."

"And then, having omitted to do his duty, he screens his fault by a—positive misstatement, when his intended return home makes further concealment impossible."

"All that, however, is of little moment," said Lord George, who could not but see that the dean was already complaining that he had been left without information which he ought to have possessed when he was giving his daughter to a probable heir to the title. "There is more than that."

"What more?"

"He had a son born more than twelve months since."

"Who says so?" exclaimed the dean, jumping up from his chair.

"I heard it first—or rather Mary did—in common conversation, from an old friend. I then learned the truth from Knox. Though he had told none of us, he had told Knox."

"And Knox has known it all through?"

"No, only lately. But he knows it now. Knox supposes that they are coming home, so that the people about may be

reconciled to the idea of his having an heir. There will be less trouble, he thinks, if the boy comes now, than if he were never heard of till he was ten or fifteen years old—or perhaps till after my brother's death."

"There may be trouble enough still," said the dean, almost with a gasp.

The dean, it was clear, did not believe in the boy. Lord George remembered that he himself had expressed disbelief, and that Mr. Knox had almost rebuked him. "I have now told you all the facts," said Lord George, "and have told them as soon as I knew them."

"You are as true as the sun," said the dean, putting his hand on his son-in-law's shoulder. "You will be honest. But you must not trust in the honesty of others: Poor Mary!"

"She does not feel it in the least; will not even interest herself about it."

"She will feel it some day. She is no more than a child now. I feel it, George; I feel it; and you ought to feel it."

"I feel his ill-treatment of myself."

"What—in not telling you? That is probably no more than a small part of a wide scheme. We must find out the truth of all this."

"I don't know what there is to find out," said Lord George, hoarsely.

"Nor do I; but I do feel that there must be something. Think of your brother's position and standing, of his past life and his present character! This is no time now for being mealy-mouthed. When such a man as he appears suddenly with a foreign woman and a foreign child, and announces one as his wife and the other as his heir, having never reported the existence of one or of the other, it is time that some enquiry should be made. I, at any rate, shall make enquiry. I shall think myself bound to do so on behalf of Mary."

Then they parted as confidential friends do part, but each with some feeling antagonistic to the other. The dean, though he had from his heart acknowledged that Lord George was as honest as the sun, still felt himself to be aggrieved by the Germain family, and doubted whether his son-in-law would be urgent enough and constant in hostility to his own brother. He feared that Lord George would be weak, feeling, as regarded himself, that he would fight till he had spent his last penny, as long as there was a chance that, by fighting, a grandson of his own might be made Marquis of

Brotherton. He, at any rate, understood his own heart in the matter, and knew what it was that he wanted. But Lord George, though he had found himself compelled to tell everything to the dean, still dreaded the dean. It was not in accordance with his principles that he should be leagued against his brother with such a man as Dean Lovelace, and he could see that the dean was thinking of his own possible grandchildren, whereas he himself was thinking only of the family of Germain.

He found his mother and sister at the small house, the house at which Farmer Price was living only a month or two since. No doubt it was the recognised dower house, but nevertheless there was still about it a flavour of Farmer Price. A considerable sum of money had been spent upon it, which had come from a sacrifice of a small part of the capital belonging to the three sisters, with an understanding that it should be repaid out of the old lady's income. But no one, except the old lady herself, anticipated such repayment. All this had created trouble and grief, and the family, which was never gay, was now more sombre than ever. When the further news was told to Lady Sarah it almost crushed her. "A child!" she said in a horror-stricken whisper, turning quite pale, and looking as though the crack of doom were coming at once. "Do you believe it?" Then her brother explained the grounds he had for believing it. "And that it was born in wedlock twelve months before the fact was announced to us."

"It has never been announced to us," said Lord George.

"What are we to do? is my mother to be told? She ought to know at once; and yet how can we tell her? What shall you do about the dean?"

"He knows."

"You told him?"

"Yes; I thought it best."

"Well, perhaps. And yet it is terrible that any man so distant from us should have our secrets in his keeping."

"As Mary's father, I thought it right that he should know."

"I have always liked the dean personally," said Lady Sarah. "There is a manliness about him which has recommended him, and having a full hand he knows how to open it. But he isn't——; he isn't quite——"

"No; he isn't quite——" said Lord

George, also hesitating to pronounce the word which was understood by both of them.

"You must tell my mother, or I must. It will be wrong to withhold it. If you like, I will tell Susanna and Amelia."

"I think you had better tell my mother," said Lord George; "she will take it more easily from you. And then, if she breaks down, you can control her better." That Lady Sarah should have the doing of any difficult piece of work was almost a matter of course. She did tell the tale to her mother, and her mother did break down. The marchioness, when she found that an Italian baby had been born twelve months before the time which she had been made to believe was the date of the marriage, took at once to her bed. What a mass of horrors was coming on them! Was she to go and see a woman who had had a baby under such circumstances? Or was her own eldest son, the very, very Marquis of Brotherton, to be there with his wife, and was she not to go and see them? Through it all her indignation against her son had not been hot, as had been theirs against their brother. He was her eldest son—the very marquis—and ought to be allowed to do almost anything he pleased. Had it not been impossible for her to rebel against Lady Sarah, she would have obeyed her son in that matter of the house. And, even now, it was not against her son that her heart was bitter, but against the woman, who, being an Italian, and having been married, if married, without the knowledge of the family, presumed to say that her child was legitimate. Had her eldest son brought over with him to the halls of his ancestors an Italian mistress, that would, of course, have been very bad, but it would not have been so bad as this. Nothing could be so bad as this. "Are we to call him Popenjoy?" she asked with a gurgling voice from amidst the bed-clothes. Now the eldest son of the Marquis of Brotherton would, as a matter of course, be Lord Popenjoy, if legitimate. "Certainly we must," said Lady Sarah, authoritatively, "unless the marriage should be disproved."

"Poor dear little thing," said the marchioness, beginning to feel some pity for the odious stranger as soon as she was told that he really was to be called Popenjoy. Then the Ladies Susanna and Amelia were informed, and the feeling became general throughout the household that the world must be near its end. What

were they all to do when he should come ? That was the great question. He had begun by declaring that he did not want to see any of them. He had endeavoured to drive them away from the neighbourhood, and had declared that neither his mother nor his sisters would "get on" with his wife. All the ladies at Cross Hall had a very strong opinion that this would turn out to be true, but still they could not bear to think that they should be living as it were next door to the head of the family, and never see him. A feeling began to creep over all of them, except Lady Sarah, that it would have been better for them to have obeyed the head of the family and gone elsewhere. But it was too late now. The decision had been made, and they must remain.

Lady Sarah, however, never gave way for a minute. "George," she said very solemnly, "I have thought a great deal about this, and I do not mean to let him trample upon us."

"It is all very sad," said Lord George.

"Yes, indeed. If I know myself, I think I should be the last person to attribute evil motives to my elder brother, or to stand in his way in aught that he might wish to do in regard to the family. I know all that is due to him. But there is a point beyond which even that feeling cannot carry me. He has disgraced himself." Lord George shook his head. "And he is doing all he can to bring disgrace upon us. It has always been my wish that he should marry."

"Of course, of course."

"It is always desirable that the eldest son should marry. The heir to the property then knows that he is the heir, and is brought up to understand his duties. Though he had married a foreigner, much as I should regret it, I should be prepared to receive her as a sister; it is for him to please himself; but in marrying a foreigner he is more specially bound to let it be known to all the world, and to have everything substantiated, than if he had married an English girl in her own parish church. As it is, we must call on her, because he says that she is his wife. But I shall tell him that he is acting very wrongly by us all, especially by you, and most especially by his own child, if he does not take care that such evidence of his marriage is forthcoming as shall satisfy all the world."

"He won't listen to you."

"I think I can make him, as far as that

goes; at any rate I do not mean to be afraid of him. Nor must you."

"I hardly know whether I will even see him."

"Yes; you must see him. If we are to be expelled from the family house, let it be his doing, and not ours. We have to take care, George, that we do not make a single false step. We must be courteous to him, but above all we must not be afraid of him."

In the meantime the dean went up to London, meaning to spend a week with his daughter in her new house. They had both intended that this should be a period of great joy to them. Plans had been made as to the theatres and one or two parties, which were almost as exciting to the dean as to his daughter. It was quite understood by both of them that the dean up in London was to be a man of pleasure, rather than a clergyman. He had no purpose of preaching either at St. Paul's or the Abbey. He was going to attend no Curates' Aid Society or Sons of the Clergy. He intended to forget Mr. Groschut, to ignore Dr. Pountney, and have a good time. That had been his intention, at least till he saw Lord George at the Deanery. But now there were serious thoughts in his mind. When he arrived, Mary had for the time got nearly rid of the incubus of the Italian marchese with her baby. She was all smiles as she kissed him. But he could not keep himself from the great subject.

"This is terrible news, my darling," he said at once.

"Do you think so, papa?"

"Certainly I do."

"I don't see why Lord Brotherton should not have a son and heir as well as anybody else."

"He is quite entitled to have a son and heir—one may almost say more entitled than anyone else, seeing that he has got so much to leave to him—but, on that very account, he is more bound than anyone else to let all the world feel sure that his declared son and heir is absolutely his son and heir."

"He couldn't be so vile as that, papa!"

"God forbid that I should say that he could. It may be that he considers himself married, though the marriage would not be valid here. Maybe he is married, and that yet the child is not legitimate." Mary could not but blush as her father spoke to her thus plainly. "All we do know is that he wrote to his own brother,

declaring that he was about to be married, twelve months after the birth of the child whom he now expects us to recognise as the heir to the title. I for one am not prepared to accept his word without evidence, and I shall have no scruple in letting him know that such evidence will be wanted."

A CARLIST CHIEF.

IN THREE PARTS. PART II.

THREE mornings later, the 7th of November, I was aroused at daylight from a somewhat restless slumber on a greasy, wine-stained table, in the single guest-room of the only tavern in the village of Azqueta. Two companions had arranged their beds with mantas on the rough stone floor, which, perhaps, was made a little softer from the fact of it being covered by an inch of dirt. One of them, Captain Parada of the staff, was shaking me by the shoulder, the other was leaning against the wall, tugging groaningly at his boots. As I sat up an awful clatter fell on my ears. There was one continuous roll of rifle-firing, as though in the street of the village itself, and amidst this could be heard the shrieking howl of shell.

"Rouse up, rouse up!" cried Parada, "an orderly has just brought the news that Moriones is attacking Barbarin, Luquin, Urbiola, and Villamayor."

There was but scant preparation necessary, so far as dressing was concerned, and a few minutes saw us mounted, and on our way to the scene of action. It was a lovely autumnal morning, the rising sun flushing on our left the summit of Montejurra, and on the right the peak of Montjardine and rocky heights of Santa Cruz de Campezo, with an exquisite tint of rose. In front the distant pinnacles of the mountains of Castile, dark gray towards their base, caught the early blush of dawn, and as our gaze wandered eagerly into the valley and over the plain, through which lay the road to Losarcos, we saw volumes of smoke, riven by flashes of fire, rolling up from the yet partially obscured region of the lower land. Ten minutes' trotting brought us level with the village of Villamayor, at the southern foot of Montjardine, from a ridge of which a battery of mountain howitzers, the bulk of the Carlist artillery, was hammering the hamlet of Urbiola. The Legitimists had just been driven from the cluster of houses, and were falling back to the point where we had drawn

bridle. The villages of Arroniz, Barbarin, and Luquin had also been occupied by Moriones after a sharp and brief struggle. The intention of the Carlist general had not been to hold them seriously, but to retire, and make his left the spur of Montejurra, his centre the road to Estella, and his right the pueblo of Villamayor. This position would prove exceedingly strong, as it could only be approached over rising ground, and every commanding point had been entrenched and strengthened; so far as time would allow. Our object was to discover the whereabouts of General Elio, and we found him on a hill slightly to the left of the centre, and some one thousand eight hundred yards from Urbiola, now, as I have said, in possession of the enemy. By this time the Carlists had retired to the line they were to defend, and as Moriones brought up and deployed his force, the action became general. It is not my intention to describe every phase of the battle—I have only to deal with an incident which concerns my story. By two in the afternoon, a series of sharp attacks had been successfully repulsed at all points, not without considerable loss to both sides, judging by the dead and wounded in our lines, and the huddled forms dotting the ground over which the Republicans had passed.

There was now a brief lull in the action, shortly broken by a furious fire from the extreme left of the Republican force, and indeed, almost in its rear. Running away from the Carlist right in the direction of Losarcos, the base from which Moriones was operating, was a ridge of broken, wooded heights, and it was at an out-flanking distance on these that spurts of smoke could be seen leaping towards the left and rear of the Government position; and to this offensive demonstration the enemy was replying vigorously with both infantry and artillery. Turning to Parada, I asked what was the meaning of the sprinkled fire opened far in advance of our presumed right, and which was calling forth such an angry response from the Republicans. Answered he:

"That is the cabecilla Rosas with his partida; he is making his way round the enemy's left with a view to strike the road to Losarcos, and so compromise the communications of Moriones. The Second Battalion of Navarre has received orders to follow and support him."

"Oh, that's Rosas, is it? Why, he is just the man I want to see at work," and

stepping up to General Elio, I asked permission to move to the right.

"Certainly, certainly, by all means," replied the Carlist commander, "only take care you are neither cut off nor shot. By-the-way, I think you have a pass signed by me?"

"Yes, thank you, general, I am all right so far as that is concerned;" and raising my boina, I went in search of my mountain pony, which with the staff-horses had been led to a screened dip, that we might not attract too much attention as a mounted group; though, for all that, a half-dozen orderlies and others had been bowled out during the morning.

Passing through Villamayor, which had resisted three successive assaults, I came upon the Marquis de Val-de-Espina, holding a cross-road at the head of a couple of squadrons of cavalry. The marquis, who is as deaf as a post, wanted to know where on earth I was going, and when I shouted my destination through the coil of india-rubber tubing, which took the place of aiguillettes, he shook his head significantly, and muttered something to the effect that I was likely to find myself in bad company, and waved his hand for me to pursue my route. A half-hour's stumbling over loose boulders and unequal ground brought me to the Second Battalion of Navarre, which had been pushed towards the extreme right in support of Rosas. Colonel Radica had halted his men for a few minutes, while engaged in questioning some peasants as to the topography of the ridge, which was intersected by numerous tracks, each apparently more difficult than the others. As I picked my way through the ranks, Carlos Barrant, commanding one of the companies, asked if I was forsaking the cause and going over to the enemy. I explained that I was seeking Rosas, and he exclaimed, "You had better stay with us; he is just as likely as not to shoot you as a spy." Of this, however, I had little fear, confident in the all-powerful protection of General Elio's pass, and so I took an oblique, downward path, which a peasant told me led to the position occupied by the cabecilla and his force. The firing was now very close, and the "ping" of the bullets or the "thud" as they struck the trees, warned me that I was approaching my destination. Now and again a wide-range shell would pass howling and crashing through the branches to the right or left, and I had to dismount

and lead the pony, which, in addition to a very natural terror, floundered and slipped amidst the loose stones. In a few minutes I came upon an unmistakable landmark. A dead Carlist lay across the track, shot through the head, and a dozen paces farther on was stretched a Republican soldier, stripped to his shirt, with a bullet hole through the two cheeks and a couple of bayonet stabs in the chest. The ground was sprinkled with exploded cartridge-cases, and here and there lay pouches, belts, and rifles, and as I advanced I saw other bodies scattered among the trees: there had evidently been an effort made at this point to dislodge Rosas and his men. The wood now began to open, and I caught a glimpse of a rocky ledge below, from which the partida were hammering away at the enemy's skirmishers and at some columns of advancing infantry. The bullets were coming in unpleasant profusion, striking the stones and nipping off twigs in every direction, and while I hesitated as to the advisability of descending the exposed slope, I was startled by the gruff tones of a voice, close at hand. Turning quickly I saw, coming towards me from a thicket, three of the cabecilla's men. They were plentifully laden with the spoil stripped from their fallen adversaries, each carrying, slung over his rifle, one or more capotes, besides scarlet trousers and blood-stained linen.

"Ola, donde vas?"—"Where are you going?"—questioned the leading irregular, and at the same time he shifted the captured clothing to his left shoulder, threw forward his piece, and with a rapid movement of the breech, charged it from the well-stocked pouch. He was imitated in this action by his comrades, and it seemed just possible that the "donde vas" would be followed by three punctuating bullets before I could reply. The appearance of these plundering stragglers was anything but prepossessing. There was no attempt at uniformity of costume, except that their dust-begrimed feet were but scantily protected by open sandals; that each had his shirt-sleeves rolled up; and that the common covering to the closely-cropped heads was the crimson boina.

"I am seeking the cabecilla Rosas," I replied; "perhaps you can tell me where to find him?"

They spoke together in low tones, and then he who had put the question as to my destination, stepped in front, exclaiming as he sprang lightly down the slope,

"Adelante"—"Forwards." The two others brought up the rear, one of them having seized the bridle of my pony, which, startled by the humming bullets, drew back, and received, as an encouragement to proceed, a savage kick, accompanied by a volley of choice Castilian oaths. I had more than once found myself in warm places, but never in a warmer than the side of this rugged slope. The skirmishing fire of the Republicans was directed upwards at the ridge occupied by the partida, and, consequently we, in our descent, had to run the gauntlet of the leaden hail, which, passing over, pattered against the rock and "swished" into the furze which filled the clefts. It seemed a miracle that none of us were touched, and I confess I was heartily glad to reach the ledge, which formed almost a natural trench, and afforded some slight protection. I judged, from the extent of the fire, that the partida numbered a couple of hundred or so; some wounded, unattended, were moaning and crying for water.

The pony was led into a hollow, and we passed along the rear of the men in action towards the extremity of the ledge. Suddenly my conductor halted, raised himself erect, carried arms, and stepped forward to a group of three, somewhat sheltered by a mass of granite. One was stretched at length with head supported on hand, the other two leaned carelessly against the rock; all were smoking the inevitable cigarette. There could be no mistaking the recumbent figure, although there was little to distinguish Rosas from his men, except that he was girt with sword and revolver, and that a brilliant gold tassel ornamented the crimson boina, from beneath which drooped the corner of a gaudily-coloured handkerchief, bound tightly round the closely-cropped head. He wore no tunic, and his entire costume consisted of sandals, scarlet trousers, blue waist-scarf, and a striped shirt, the sleeves of which were rolled above the elbow, a fashion apparently peculiar to the band. The two others, whose appointments were somewhat similar, were, as I afterwards learned, his adjutant and second in command.

My conductor having reported how he fell in with me, I was motioned to advance. The cabecilla looked up sharply, and seeing that I returned his gaze with confidence, turned his eyes restlessly away, and under cover of a cloud of cigarette smoke I was asked where I came from, and what had

brought me to the rear of the extreme right, close to the enemy's position? In answer I explained that I was an Englishman, that I had the permission of Don Carlos and the commander-in-chief to follow the Carlist army, and that having heard much of the cabecilla Rosas, and the partida of Navarre, I had worked my way round to where he and his men were engaged, desirous of witnessing the action from a point likely to prove most interesting. Then producing General Elio's pass, I handed it to the chief of irregulars, who scanned it carelessly.

"Oh, as to passes," exclaimed the cabecilla, "anyone can procure them. Half the spies I lay hold of have some kind of paper or other; and as to your being an Englishman, that does not mend the matter. They are all heretics and enemies of the Catholic religion for which we are fighting, and just as likely as not to be in league with the Republicans, who want to destroy the Holy Roman Church. Besides, how do I know you are a foreigner? I dare say, if you liked, you could speak as good Castilian as myself; it's very easy to sham a bad accent."

Having thus expressed himself the cabecilla rose to his feet, and, moving a little aside with the adjutant and second in command, they all three examined the pass narrowly and conferred together in low tones. The irregular who had introduced me, and who had remained on guard by my side, raised his rifle, opened the breech, examined the cartridge, and glancing from me to one or two men who were potting away close by, said loud enough for them to hear, "Otro toro"—signifying another bull for slaughter. Really matters looked anything but encouraging. The blood of the partida was evidently at boiling point. They had been engaged in a hard struggle to reach their present position, and were, judging by the columns of advancing infantry, about to be assaulted by an overwhelming force. They had only to get the notion into their heads that a spy had been taken, and many of the rifles, now cracking at the Republicans, would in all probability be turned on the presumed confidant. The great point was to appear cool and unconcerned, so I took my pipe from my breast-pocket, filled it, struck a light, and commenced smoking in a quiet, measured fashion. At this moment there was a peculiar crushing "thud" on my left, and turning, I saw the nearest of the

partidas, who was kneeling and in the act of firing, spring by sheer muscular action to his feet, raise his arms, sway round with his blood-covered face within a yard of mine, and clutching wildly at the air, fall heavily forwards, stone dead. Of course this was an incident of battle which, under other circumstances, would scarcely attract attention, but at the moment it flashed across my mind that even if I were not shot by Rosas, I should probably receive my account from the Republicans, who, from the increased volume of fire, were evidently coming on in earnest.

The cabecilla now turned and motioned me to advance, and after a side glance at my pipe, said in a remarkably quiet way:

"I don't put much faith in this paper; it may or may not be General Elio's signature; but such papers, forged or not, are easily to be procured. I cannot understand your being so far on the right; to my mind the whole thing seems suspicious, and so think my companions. As to your being an Englishman—bah! What should Englishmen be doing here—heretics and enemies of our faith? Por Dios! I only see one way of settling the question, and——"

"But, senor," I observed calmly, knocking the ashes from my pipe, "but, senor, if you dispute my word and General Elio's salvo-conducto, it is very easy for you to ascertain my identity by sending a messenger to the colonel of the Second Navarre, which battalion I passed on its way to support the movement you are operating."

"Carajo! you say the Second Navarre is advancing;" and turning to the comandante and adjutant he exclaimed: "Démonio! companeros, if this man speaks the truth, we will yet hold the position and warm the ribs of these puercos de guiris."

As he thus expressed himself, somewhat passionately, a loud shout was heard, rising above the roll of the rifle fire, and at the same moment shell after shell burst against the lower portion of the ridge, or flew shrieking above our heads. The Republican skirmishers had been reinforced and were swarming upwards through the thicket-covered slope, and the columns in their rear were evidently preparing to assault the ledge occupied by the partida.

"Keep this man in view," said Rosas to the irregular, who had never quitted

my side; "and if he attempts to escape, shoot him;" and, drawing his sword, he passed hurriedly along the line, accompanied by his subordinates.

There could be no doubt about the cabecilla's pluck. He halted wherever there was the least shelter, springing on to exposed masses of rock and encouraging his men, who, while recharging their pieces, shouted defiantly at the advancing guiris. The fire was now hotter than ever, and the air was filled with a humming, as though myriads of gigantic mosquitoes were buzzing about our ears.

Returning to that portion of the line where he had left me, Rosas stepped forward and said constrainedly, the corners of his mouth twitching the while:

"You mentioned that the Second Navarre was advancing to my support. I see or hear no sign of them. I shall be driven back, and you——"

As he spoke, a form partially fell and partially slid down the steep furze-covered incline in our rear, and to my inexpressible delight I recognised one of Radica's officers. Picking himself up, he looked at me with a comical expression of astonishment, and exclaimed, rubbing his knees and elbows:

"Ola, Inglese! how, in the name of all the saints, did you find your way here? Por Dios, I am one mass of bruises. Where is that *démonio* Rosas?"

"That *démonio* Rosas is here at your service," quietly observed the cabecilla, beginning to roll a cigarette.

"Ah! a thousand excuses," exclaimed my friend, rather taken aback. "I used the term '*démonio*,' for really you must be one to have got into this position;" thus making the amende honorable and paying a compliment at the same time. Rosas merely shrugged his shoulders by way of acknowledgment, lit his cigarette, and pointed to me.

"You know this—this caballero?"

"Know him? certainly. He is known to the entire battalion."

"Under these circumstances," observed the cabecilla, turning to me, "it is probable I might have made a mistake." I bowed, and thought it very likely he had made many such. The man, whose delicate mission it had been to shoot me if I attempted to escape, was ordered into line, and the adjutant handed me back my pass.

"Senor," said the officer from the Second Navarre, addressing the cabecilla, "I have been directed by Colonel Radica to inform

you that he is about to enter into action on your left. He begs, meanwhile, that you will hold your position against the force now advancing, as it is his intention to take the assaulting column in flank when it has sufficiently advanced."

"Basta, I will hold it," replied Rosas; and he turned to join his men, who, learning the proximity of one of the best battalions in the Carlist army, raised a shout of renewed defiance, and doubled the rapidity of their fire. My friend remained to watch the result of the enemy's attack, and as it was not imperative that either of us should be killed, we sought a somewhat more sheltered position.

Ignorant of Radica's near presence, for his battalion was descending the slope through a thick forest growth, the Republican commander concentrated his attention on the ledge occupied by the cabecilla. The ascent was steep and rugged, though the patches of brier and furze afforded excellent cover to the skirmishers, of whom little could be seen beyond the smoke from their rifles. Three guns on the Losarcos road kept up a continual shelling, which, however, did but little harm, as most of the missiles either burst against the lower portion of the rock forming the ledge, or passed over to a safe distance. Notwithstanding the rapid fire from two hundred breechloaders, directed from such an advantageous position as that held by the partida, the Republicans worked steadily upwards, and in a very few minutes the guiris had gained sufficient ground to enable them to shout replies to the injurious epithets applied to them by the cabecilla's men. Now was made a determined rush, and it seemed very probable that the Madrid troops would be on to the ledge, and many an anxious glance was directed to the left. Still not a sign of the Second Navarre, and it seemed that a few moments would bring the assaulting column pell-mell into our midst. So near, indeed, had the leading skirmishers approached that those of the partida, whose cartridges were exhausted, commenced hurling masses of rock on to the assailants; and despite the desperate courage displayed by Rosas and his men, they would certainly have had to give way before the coming overwhelming torrent. I had already glanced over my shoulder and chosen the track I would follow, supposing the position to be carried. My companion, very naturally, seeing the touch-and-go condition of affairs, had seized the rifle

and pouch of a wounded man who lay groaning by our side, and was potting away in famous fashion at the advance, now completely exposed.

"Br-r-r-ram!" There was a roar of rifles on our left that made every heart leap. At last Radica had entered the game with eight hundred fresh players. Not only had he approached his right to the cabecilla's position, but he had curved his left wing downwards, enveloping the Republican flank in a semicircle of fire. What a frenzied yell rose from the partida, answered cheerily by the chicos of the Second. It would have been hard indeed, even for a member of the Peace Society, to withstand the excitement of the moment. I confess that I was fairly carried away. I leaped on to a rock, which a moment before I should have considered as the threshold to the grave. The Republican skirmishers seemed paralysed, and the column that had looked upon the position as won, halted, opened a wild fire, wavered, and then fairly broke and fled. On the ledge, yell after yell of derision was raised, there was a rattle of fixing bayonets, and then the bare-armed irregulars, led by the cabecilla, bounded over the natural wall of granite and drove with their flashing steel into the retreating skirmishers; and many a sharp cry of agony pierced above the shouts of exultation. Radica and his men also swept downwards, and by dusk the partida and Second Navarre were entrenching themselves in a position which commanded the Losarcos road, and consequently compromised the communications of Moriones and his base. Notwithstanding that the action was continued during the next day, the third morning saw the Republicans in full retreat, followed by General Elio with the inferior Carlist force, and stung to death on their flank by Radica and Rosas.

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this episode of the engagement of Montejurra that the cabecilla might be seen at his best. I have now to deal with a portion of his career in which he appears in a very different light.

THE BOYS.

VERY long ago the destiny of "the boys"—of those hopeful human fledgelings who await, on the edge of the nest, the friendly push into mid-air that is to launch them in life—was apt to shape itself by the con-

dition of the parents. It was so in India, and in that Egypt, mother of nations, to which India stands in the same relation, as a teacher, as Egypt to Greece. Court favour alone could help a subject of the Great King up the gilded ladder. In Hellas, to be sure, where all free citizens stood babbling in the market-place or listening to more pretentious oratory in the porch, smart talkers and ready wits came naturally to the front. A flashing-eyed young Greek, more ready with his repartee, more graceful in his gesticulation, than the average of his fluent countrymen, was marked for promotion, and almost certainly got it.

In Rome there were fewer openings for any but the most transcendent merit, unbacked by interest. A young gentleman who had the good luck to belong to the Julian or the Claudian gens, and to possess respectable brains and a well-made person, might aspire to lead the legions, or to bear despotic sway over crouching millions of provincials. But for those who had not the fortune to be born with a gold spoon in their mouths, or to have a purple hem to their baby-clothes, the prizes were few and hard won. A dull, dead weight of nepotism pressed on the nation's breast, and many a bold centurion and many an upright judge must have bitterly reflected that it was better to be a patrician's freedman, more profitable to curry favour with Cæsar's buffoons and barbers, than to rise by desert alone.

Oddly enough the middle ages, roughly reckoned from the time of Charlemagne to that of our own Elizabeth, afforded a surprising amount of opportunities to such as were prompt to seize them. There was a scramble ever going on, the rewards of which were gay crests and jewelled coronets, mitres whose splendour pales the episcopal crown of a modern bishop, the white staff of my lord treasurer, the golden leash of the grand huntsman, or the red hat of a cardinal legate. The boys, if only they had the right stuff in them, were then easily provided for—that is, if studious Willie would but take the tonsure and be a clerk, or perhaps a monk of some learned order, leaving his strong brother Richard to pierce breastplates and hew helmets, until sheer valour and hard hitting should earn for him the golden spurs and the baron's land.

There were other open sesames to preferment, even in feudal times, as in the days of the Renaissance, than brute force of military prowess. To be a poet then

was to have a chance of basking in the sunshine of a court, where there was a very cornucopia of good things to be given away. A pretty lay, a rattling song, might be recompensed by a snug canonry, or some lay office which entitled the holder for life to wear furred robe and golden chain. To translate a classic, to comment on a father, or even to preach a mellifluous sermon, might be the foundation of a fortune, and Sir Christopher Hatton was not the only candidate who danced himself into a high position.

The Reformation and the revival of learning very much raised the standard of popular education, but lessened the chances of individual advancement. It took the storm of the civil wars to waft Cromwell from his Huntingdon mash-tubs, and his captaincy of militia, and his projected New England farm, to Whitehall and to the dignity of being the only Englishman who ever refused the proffered crown. His poor Latin secretary, one Master John Milton, was born some centuries too late, as regarded his worldly chances. What a career might sweet-singing John Milton, or glorious John Dryden either, for that matter, have run in Plantagenet reigns; one perhaps finishing as Bishop of Durham, and his brother bard as mitred Abbot of Westminster!

Presently came the dull, ponderous, fat-headed Georgian epoch, the age of cauliflower wigs, sinecures, jobbery, and gross feeding. It was a bad time for the boys, unless indeed those interesting adolescents could count consinship with a courtier, or a mayor, or a prelate; for the loaves and fishes were very jealously guarded. England was in some sort a close corporation. Almost every town was governed by a set of comfortable dignitaries who elected themselves, entertained themselves at dinner in the Guildhall, and audited their accounts, in a friendly way, among themselves. India was the preserve of East India Directors, their friends, and their hangers-on. A kindly earl would make a king's messenger of his valet. Young ladies drew the pay of captains of dragoons, while some veteran lieutenant in shabby uniform did the work. Lean curates grew grey in the pulpit for the benefit of pluralist rectors card-playing at Bath.

Even when the Whig aristocracy had ceased to rule England, and Great George, our king, stung to madness by American independence and French revolution, and zealously backed by the upper middle

class who had funded property or official incomes, was riding roughshod over foreign and domestic foes, there was little scope for ambition. A gallant lad might get on in the navy, a shrewd one at the bar. Those were the only two professions that could be called open ones. But how heavy weighed the horsehair on the brows of many a briefless barrister who sat for years in court, silent, like a ghost, for lack of an invitation to speak; while yellow fever, new rum, ten-gun brigs, and boating service, made short work with aspirants to the fame of Howe or Nelson.

Theoretically, an excellent field, or rather a choice of excellent fields, now invites the juvenile energy of our young men. The ingenuous youth no longer sees, as thirty years ago he would have done, "No thoroughfare" conspicuously posted at the door of almost every guild, calling, or profession. To "take care of Dowb" is not so easy for the Lord Privileges of this generation as it once was. More doctors, parsons, inspectors, commissioners, and agents are wanted than formerly. Commerce offers splendid possibilities, and emigration no longer involves the complete surrender of early habits and home affections that it did, when kangaroos ranged over the sites of Melbourne and Sydney.

Alas! much the same old difficulties and old disappointments lie in wait for the boys and their anxious parents, as were stumbling-blocks in the path of those who went before them. Now, as ever, the weak go to the wall, and a light purse kicks the beam when weighed against one that is better filled. The "excellent education" which Ernest and Arthur have received, and to provide which papa and mamma have pinched and taken thought and practised self-denial, fails to procure the requisite number of marks when the great day comes on. The hope and pride of the family, no longer, but a lad who honestly tries to do his best, is beaten in a canter by the more artfully-prepared pupil of a crammer whose whole intellect is devoted to this one special purpose.

In private life, as in the struggle for Government employ, we hear the old complaints, that professions are over-stocked, small ventures readily lost, and every colony glutted with repentant Jasons who have sailed for the Golden Fleece, and not having found so much as an auriferous curl of it, are disgusted and homesick. Doleful letters come from white-handed lads who

went out to South America, high in health and hope, and are tired of a scanty meal of black beans and sun-dried beef, and would return if only they could muster the passage-money. Oaks of the Royal Plungers curses the day when he was persuaded to put the price of his commission into that Australian farm, which he is fain to sell, stock and all, for half the cost price. Young Pestler cannot make a living of his chemist's shop, and Miss Scruby must do genteel penance by semi-starvation, for the credulity which allowed her to invest her aunt's legacy in Rio Brigande Bonds or Kurdish Six per Cents.

Of course it may be said, and not untruly, that all this chorus of querulous complaint is no more than might be looked for; that those who come back discontented from a colony are precisely the persons who never should have gone there; and that money can be fooled away, and unseaworthy ships go down, without blame being attached to the world at large. If professional crammers are to the youths under their care what professional trainers are to the thoroughbreds at Newmarket, and render it as difficult for an outsider to compete with them as for a stray hack or carriage-horse to run for a cup, it is still legitimate to buy the best tuition in the market, just as it is to purchase the primest of beef and mutton. But still there remains unsolved the difficult question as to what is to be done with "the boys."

KING'S COMBE.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

THE next morning answered our expectations; Percy said the air "smelt foxes;" Rutherford said, "Hang the breakfast; we might have had a glorious run, instead of sitting down to a heavy feed!"

I could hear the voices of their two younger brothers in the stable-yard until after the guests had arrived. Cuthbert had always been a chum of Dick's, and, since Dick had been in the army, an admirer; he had become enthusiastic since his easy-going brother had defied the will that had been law to them all, and "stood up for his rights like a thorough-plucked 'un."

In this mood, Cuthbert found it wiser to keep out of the way of his muscular and less sympathetic elder brothers. However, they came in to breakfast, Dick holding his head up once more now that

the worst was over, and looking half-shy, half-resolute. He had an unexpected ordeal before him; for Dick was a favourite with the Lubshire hunting-men, and he was surrounded on his entrance by a group of country squires, who had not seen him since he had entered the army.

"Why, Dick, you look as fresh as if you had never left Lubshire!"

"How do, Dick; glad to see you back again; confound you, you've got as good a grip as your father!"

Dick's nervousness had probably increased the force of his hand-shaking.

"Like to see you in pink again, Dick!"

"Why, he wouldn't know himself out of a red coat now," said another, leading the laugh at his little joke.

"You ought to be proud of that lad, squire," said the swell of the neighbourhood, in a coat of divers colours, once scarlet; "he's the best-looking you've turned out yet!"

"Handsome is that handsome does, Sir Harry," returned the squire, briefly.

Dick did look handsome in his scarlet coat, and honest too; a slight, well-built fellow, with fair, flushed face, thick brown hair, and bright, steady-looking eyes; strong in youth and vigorous health as even the squire could desire, but encumbered with the unprovided-for attributes of a heart and a conscience. Poor Dick, what mischief these were working him!

The breakfast was long enough to try Rutherford's patience to the utmost; but at last the guests began to straggle out into the hall and then into the drive; looking for their grooms with their horses, and not finding them as soon as might have been expected. In the country every man-servant has a brother, sister, or at any rate a cousin, in everyone else's establishment; and there was generally, on these occasions, a large party of more or less smart grooms refreshing exhausted nature in the back-yard.

I went straight to the stable, mounted my horse, and cantered out on to the wide lawn in front of the house, where the rest of the field were gradually assembling. Parallel to this lawn, and separated from it only by a bed of rhododendrons and a wire fence, ran the drive which led from the green lodge to the house. Resolved to get out of the way of the farmers, and to wait quietly until all should be ready, I took my stand near a group of bare elms close to the fence, and saw in the drive, some few paces distant, the rector's pony-

carriage, with Mary in it alone, the rector having pottered off in search of Mr. Hedley. She did not see me, for she was looking with great interest among the moving groups on the lawn; for whom? Was it for Dick, whom I now saw hurrying down the drive from the house, radiant and ruddy? She started when she heard his voice close to her; I thought she did not look pleased.

"Mary, my darling, you here! I can hardly believe my eyes!"

"Oh, how you frightened me! Yes, papa came up, hoping to see Mr. Hedley; your brother said he would be here," said Mary, looking away rather uneasily.

"I owe the Rider a good turn for that, my darling," said Dick, in his deep clear voice; and he tried to take her hand. Mary was human enough to be petulant.

"Hush, Dick, pray don't shout so!" said she, drawing her hand away.

Dick looked a little rebuffed, but he was in too high spirits to be quite crushed, and he was not subtle enough to have discovered that Mary was at her tenderest when he was quite crushed.

"Very well, Mary, I won't shout, and I'll keep my hands to myself if you like," said he, thrusting them into his pockets.

Dick looked very handsome as he stood beside her in his scarlet coat and hunting-cap. Mary glanced at him tyrannically—and softened.

"That's right, Mary," said the scapegrace, with his hands out of his pockets in a moment, and coming nearer again; "I've got such a lot to tell you, and I wanted a smile to help me out with it!"

"Well, what is it? You must make haste, or papa will be back."

Dick plunged into an account of the scene of the evening before. Mary was interested.

"Dorbridge! Eight hundred a year! Oh, how nice! It's such a pretty place, Dick, with a lovely vicarage in such beautiful grounds!"

"Why, Mary, you don't think I'm going to turn parson, do you?" asked Dick, in amazement.

"You don't mean to say you are going to thwart your father again, and throw away such an opportunity of——"

"Thwart my father! Why, do you want to see me married to that hard-riding Lady Ethel, and snuffing psalms as her father-confessor? That's what my father wants me to do. No, don't be angry, Mary, but you know I could never

make a clergyman—I'm not half good enough. I'm awfully vexed about it though, Mary, since you like Dorbridge so much. It's just like my luck; if I'd only been cut out for a curate, been a sober-looking sort of chap, I might have taken to the pulpit, married you off-hand, and seen Lady Ethel at the deuce. Well, I must work for you, that's all, Mary, if you'll only wait for such a good-for-nothing fellow, my darling!"

And Dick looked up so tenderly, so entreatingly, that Mary's face softened again. Carried away by his gratitude and his love, Dick seized the forbidden hand and, leaning over the little carriage, pressed it with passionate kisses. As he did so a rider cantered by on the soft turf of the lawn. It was Rutherford. He saw them and rode on, looking as black as thunder. Hapless Dick, bending over his darling's hand, had neither seen nor heard him—but Mary had! The wavering, tender look on her face changed, and she drew her half-willing hand sharply away, angry with herself for her momentary weakness; her low words were chilling.

"How dare you, Dick? You are in no fit state to come and talk to me!"

Dick started up in amazement.

"In no fit state to talk to you! Do you mean that I'm—that I've been drinking, Mary?"

But neither his handsome face nor his indignant words could soften her now; she looked at him calmly and coldly.

"I mean that you had better go back to your grooms and your horses," said she, in a voice just as soft as ever, but as effective in displeasure as it had been in kindness. There was no mistaking her; Dick, stricken, scarcely believing, looked steadfastly in her face for a moment, and knew she meant it; then a look, more wistful than indignant, came into his face; he still had one hand on the side of the carriage; Mary thought he was going to make another appeal, and began composedly to gather up the reins. Then Dick started. Stepping back, he raised his cap and bowed gravely to her, looking into her eyes with a steadiness equal to her own. Dick had the best of it that time; her hands faltered, and her bow was hardly as dignified as it ought to have been. But Dick was too generous, or perhaps hardly composed enough, to notice this; he turned and walked straight back to the house.

I saw that my former enchantress quickly recovered her serenity, and then I

had not the patience to look at her again. After staring idly at the gathering groups on the lawn for a few minutes, I indulged my now impatient horse, and cantered off to the yard.

Rutherford was there, rowing a couple of grooms about something, and also Cuthbert, mounting his horse. Then I heard Dick's voice behind me, in the roughest of tones.

"Where on earth is Cheverley Run? He ought to have been round half-an-hour ago!"

Then the apologetic voice of the groom.

"Very sorry, sir; but squire said Mr. Marston was to have Cheverley Run, as his horse wasn't here in time; and as you could have Blackthorn or the chestnut mare."

"What! Lent Cheverley Run to that heavy brute Marston? I'm——" Here Dick thought proper to check himself.

"Blackthorn's in very good form, sir!"

"Hang Blackthorn—rushes at every fence!"

Dick walked a few steps away, in the blackest of tempers; then turned sharply round again:

"How's the mare?"

The groom hesitated.

"Well, sir, you see she ain't exactly fit for huntin' yet. On Thursday she threw two of us, and she ain't been out since."

Dick considered a moment; as he stood thus, Rutherford, who had been quietly attentive to all that passed, rode by him.

"Too spirited for you, eh, Parson Dick? Sorry we haven't got a nice, quiet cob!" and he rode out of the yard.

Dick was no sage, and the taunt was enough for him. He told the groom, with an oath, to look sharp out with the mare; then, when they led out a handsome, powerful-looking, vicious-eyed animal, pulling so that they could scarcely hold her, Dick jumped on her back, and forced her, rearing and kicking, out of the yard.

I did not quite like to see Dick, in his dare-devil mood, on a brute of so questionable a character; I turned to the groom who had held the dialogue with him:

"Not a very safe animal, that, for hunting, I should think! Are you not afraid of his coming to grief?"

"Not he, sir," replied the groom, confidently. "I don't know the animal as Master Dick couldn't sit. All he asks is that they should go, and that the mare can do. She's awk'ard to ride, as I know myself, for she's sent me flyin' over a brick

wall into a bed of nettles; but Master Dick 'll bring her to her senses, I'll warrant!"

Reassured, I rode out of the yard, on being told that the squire was now on the lawn, and that there was at last some prospect of a start.

There was a good field that day, though not nearly so large as it would have been if the squire's uncompromising character, and equally uncompromising fences, had not kept it always pretty well weeded. There was hardly a gate that would open on the estate, and woe to the unlucky wight who brought his one hack out for a run with the Combe pack, trusting to gaps! Every hedge bristled stiffly at such a one in thickset animosity. But to-day, fortified by Combe good cheer, there was yet, besides the sturdy few who "meant going," a goodly crop of heroes, who would wisely drop off after the first field or two, if they were not got rid of by still more summary means at the first fence.

There, in the midst of them, stood the squire, running a knowing eye over Lady Betty before mounting, and exchanging a remark or two with his second in command. There was a stir among the groups of horsemen, and the amateurs were more subdued; Squire Combe was a model M.F.H., and a glance of his eye struck terror into the hearts of the most intrepid duffers.

Rutherford was standing, his bridle on his arm, by Mary Combe, looking at first rather sulky, but evidently allowing himself to be brought round. Not far off was Lady Ethel Dereham, mounted on a spirited bay, which she managed with perfect ease, while sustaining a lively flirtation with the good-natured Percy, who contrived to insinuate that Dick's neglect to pay his respects to her arose from jealousy of Percy himself.

I looked round for Dick, and saw him cantering up from a distant part of the lawn on the now docile mare. The groom was right. He had brought her to her senses, and the exertion had done something towards clearing his brow. I hoped with all my heart that he would not look at his unkind darling, who had now quite brought the Rider round, and was chatting with him most amicably.

But I knew that he would—and he did. Rutherford saw him: turning to Mary, he spoke a few more words to her and then held out his hand. She gave him hers; he bent his head and lightly kissed it, and she let him! The shrubs and tree-trunks

screened them sufficiently from general observation as they were some distance off; but Dick and I, with our attention riveted in that direction, could see all plainly enough. Dick turned quite white. Involuntarily he must have pricked the mare with the spur, for she began rearing and plunging; and, when he had again reduced her to order, the squire was at my side, the hounds had thrown off, and we were cantering down to cover.

I looked at Dick's face again, and saw the old Combe look there, fierce and sullen, while the restraint he put on the mare's pace was evidently more irksome to him than to her.

It was not long before we found. I heard the welcome "tally-ho," while pottering about in company with Rutherford, Dick, and one or two more, a little apart from the rest of the field, on that side of the copse where an old hand had conjectured that the fox would break covert. We were wrong; the shout came from the other side of the copse, and the fox was well away before we came in sight of him. There was the pack, some distance ahead, and two or three fields to the right. Some of us swore I fancy, and we all did our best to make up for the lost start. Immediately to the right of us were a couple of ploughed fields, and then, between us and the pack, the jump Cuthbert had told me about; the bank and double hedge on this side and the brook on the other. Rutherford was not on Lady Betty to-day, and none of the rest of us would have attempted it, but Dick at once struck off in that direction.

Knowing the reputation of this jump, not all my excitement could prevent my watching him with anxiety; in his reckless mood, he must have started off, forgetful of what lay before him. I glanced at Rutherford, and was startled to see that he also was watching his brother anxiously.

Forgetting the chase, we kept our eyes fixed upon dare-devil Dick, as, letting the mare go, he tore across the fields. He was making for the fatal fence; not looking to right or left for an easy place, but riding straight at it with a steadiness that made my heart leap.

"The fool!" shouted Rutherford, "she can't do it!"

Dick rode on, unhearing or unheeding. As he neared it he spurred the mare; she rose to the leap, touched the top of the hedge, wavered, struggled, and fell back, half crushing her rider under her.

Rutherford, beside me, said not a word, and we galloped up in dead silence, and swung off our horses near the struggling mare and her moaning rider. He had tried to extricate himself in falling, and had half succeeded at the expense of one leg fearfully mangled, and what other injuries we knew not. A dozen yokels who had been watching the hunt now came up, and surrounded us in gaping horror, followed by the riders who had been with us. Poor Dick writhed with agony as, under his brother's abrupt commands, we removed the terrible weight which was crushing him, and then he fainted away.

By Rutherford's orders a hurdle was quickly brought from an adjoining field; we lifted him on to it, and bore him slowly to the nearest cottage. Two or three of the rustics were sent off for the doctor; half-a-dozen more had followed us into the cottage before one of our party thought of shutting the gate. A trembling woman, awed into quiet by Rutherford's stern manner, whispered as we entered that there was a bed in the next room; we took him in there, and, as he was still unconscious, we gently placed him on it.

The pain of this brought him back to consciousness. The ghastly face drew into lines of pain as he opened his eyes.

"Those people! What do they all want?" said he, irritably, as he saw the curious, gaping group who had crept in after us.

Rutherford only looked round savagely, and, like frightened sheep, they huddled back into the next room, and were ejected by the woman of the house, including all of our own party but one, who, not liking to desert his comrade even though he could do no good, bribed the woman to let him wait in the outer room.

I only stayed with Rutherford by the bedside.

Dick tried to move, and groaned.

"You had better keep still," said Rutherford, harshly.

His brother lay quietly for a minute, and then asked feebly, "How did it happen?"

"You tried to take the brook fence—might have known the mare couldn't do it," replied the Rider. "Here, you had better have some brandy."

I handed him my flask, disgusted with his hardness. Was the great brute going to bully his brother on his death-bed?—for when I looked at Dick I could not

hope. Supported by his brother's arm, which was as firm and as steady as ever, Dick drank a little. Then, quite unmanned by the sight of the poor lad's quivering muscles and stern efforts to control his sufferings, I stole behind the bed to the window, to watch for the doctor. As I stood there I heard a strange sound. Turning, I saw Rutherford down on his knees by the bedside, his head bent, his great frame convulsed by violent sobs.

Dick, regardless of the pain, struggled to raise himself, trying hoarsely to stop him.

"I did it! I did it! 'Parson Dick!' Oh, God!" burst out Rutherford.

"You, Rutherford, no—no! Hush! It wasn't you! It wasn't that! Mary—I was a fool to be jealous—I must tell you now, Rider—she and I have been engaged ever so long!"

Rutherford looked up, and I saw his face change.

"Don't let her think it was that killed me, Rutherford! Poor little thing! Give her my love—my love—and—they're all in my desk—and this——"

He put one hand falteringly to his breast, and fell back exhausted. Rutherford sprang up and supported his head. He spoke hoarsely but steadily:

"Yes, I'll give them to her—and your message. Don't talk now. Take some more brandy."

Dick opened his eyes, dreamily; then they brightened once more.

"No more; I'm not in pain now. I won't talk—but—the squire—tell the squire—I've made up—my mind!"

He tried to smile, and then his head dropped. There was silence in the room for a minute, and then Rutherford spoke to him. But Dick was dead.

THE FUEL OF THE FUTURE.

COAL-GAS—in that learned language with which South Kensington is gradually making us familiar, carburetted hydrogen—seems likely to enjoy a shorter lease of popularity as an illuminator, than its ancient predecessor, oil. The oil-lamp had it all its own way for a few thousands or tens of thousands of years—a few æons more or less do not signify since geology was invented—and very well it did its duty; so well, indeed, that oil-lamps and candles have undergone but a slight eclipse at

the hands of their more convenient rival. Coal-gas is yet a new thing, with its capabilities yet undeveloped, and may, if things advance at their present rate, be destined to perform far other duties than those of an illuminator. Since it was first introduced for that purpose it has done very good work. In conjunction with steam and electricity it has done much to raise the intellectual status of the criminal classes, and, above all, to deter the amateur from dabbling with the pursuits of a regular profession. When street-lighting was in its infancy, and gas as yet was not, the "high-toby man" could sit, as Hogarth has painted him, enjoying life in a gaming-house until he saw a gamester strike a good vein of luck, and then had time to set off and lie in wait, with the object of relieving the fortunate youth of his golden burden. Ill-lighted streets and dark roads favoured the operations of the highwayman, and encouraged broken gentlemen to poach now and then on his domains; but since gas broke out in our thoroughfares the high-toby man has disappeared altogether, and the footpad only gets a chance of showing his boldness now and then. The burglar, too, has been so seriously interfered with by gas that he demands a far higher training now than formerly, and the world thanks gas for relieving it from some at least of the coarser and more brutal forms of robbery. Thus gas has done its work well enough, but other means of lighting houses and thoroughfares already threaten to put its pipe out; and if all be true that is told of electric lights and electric candles, another decade may see gas deposed from its now important position. There are many disadvantages attending its use, the chief of which is perhaps the tremendous heat given off by it during consumption. This peculiarity, however, which makes it particularly unsuitable for lighting dwelling-rooms, suggests its employment for another equally important purpose. As fuel gas is now coming rapidly into use, and when we have had time to shake off a little more of the old English prejudice in favour of the blazing hearth, the yule log, and the rest of the superstitions of our forefathers, we shall probably adopt the doctrine that carburetted hydrogen is a singularly valuable and portable form of fuel. It is already established that houses may be warmed as well as lighted, and dinners cooked as well as eaten by gas, and that it is quite possible to do without the grosser forms of

fuel altogether. To heat a bath, or to cook a chop, it is surely easier and cleaner to turn on the gas while it is wanted, and to turn it off when it is not. All this is admitted; but for the present an idea prevails that gas is expensive, unwholesome, and dangerous into the bargain.

Let us deal first with danger. Gas, either as an illuminator or simply as fuel, is wondrously safe as compared with candles, wood, or coals. Fires in bedrooms are perpetually occurring because people who employ gas in their hall, and even in their dining and drawing rooms, for some incomprehensible reason stick to the candle for their bedrooms. Properly managed the bedroom candle is not a very dangerous weapon, but its danger arises from the fact that it is used by sleepy people, or by those more objectionable creatures who are not sleepy but who wish to read in bed. Now reading in bed till one falls to sleep is a delightful entertainment, for two reasons. First, because at midnight in one's own bedroom there is a fair chance of peace and quietness; and, secondly, because the attitude is easy, and if sleep encroaches upon study one lies prepared for the drowsy god. All this is made simple by gas in bedrooms. It is said to be unwholesome to sleep with the gas blazing all night. This is nonsense, if the room be properly ventilated and only one gas-jet kept burning. The writer, during a sojourn in America, where gas is to be found in every bedroom, read himself steadily to sleep night after night and year after year, without experiencing the slightest ill-effect from the gas burning all night in his room. Had he followed the good old plan of reading in bed with a tallow candle by his side he would have in all probability been "burnt to a crisp" long ago. Nothing is more thoroughly safe, economical, and clean, than gas in the way of light and fuel; but it is with its employment in the latter capacity that we are now chiefly concerned.

Since the coal famine we fairly-prosperous English folk have looked sharply enough at our coal bills, but much of our acuteness has been directed not quite to the proper spot. We have very sensibly adopted new shapes of grates and kitcheners, many of them most ingeniously constructed with a view to saving fuel, both coal and coke; and in taking kindly to the kitchener have had to encounter the sturdy opposition of the British plain cook. This worthy female could not in the be-

ginning "abide" kitcheners. She loved the noble range, with its army of trivets, with, on one side, the oven that would never bake, and on the other the boiler that was always out of order. There was a grand extravagance about the good old range which pleased the plain cook. To roast a joint and boil a bit of fish and a few vegetables she used fuel enough to roast an ox, or at least a wild boar stuffed with nightingales. It would perhaps, as she would style it, be "mean and under-hand" to accuse her of keeping up a fierce fire for the express purpose of increasing her perquisites in the shape of dripping; but there is no doubt that the waste in cooking on her system is enormous, and the result the plainest of plain roast and boiled. "The best thing for you, my dear sir," exclaims Dr. Drugmore, always ready with a clap-trap, "plain living and high thinking, you know." It is in vain to urge upon Drugmore that as fine an indigestion can be acquired by eating boiled beef and carrots as by indulgence in *côtelettes à la Soubise*, *suprême de volaille aux truffes*, and wild duck with bigarade sauce. He is sleek and successful, and middle-aged, and dull. He represents, as compared with ordinary mankind, the boiled mutton of humanity, without the caper-sauce. He is a good man, undoubtedly, an excellent husband and father, and pays his rent regularly. He has only one fault: he is absolutely and totally unbearable.

It is men like Drugmore who keep up English superstitions, and are the firmest allies of the plain cook. They build up theories about the superior wholesomeness of meat roasted in front of an enormous kitchen fire, to that cooked in any other way, and are pitiless in the war they wage against "kickshaws." Their doctrine is all of one piece. To be good, an article of food must be sanctioned by long familiarity with English tables, and it must be cooked in the good old wasteful manner dear to the plain cook. If a joint, it must be burnt on the out and raw on the inside, and, if a vegetable, must be boiled in plain water and served up in its native condition, to the end that you "may know what you are eating." Those people supported the plain cook in her resistance to the kitchener, and they now support her in preventing the introduction of gas as fuel for cooking purposes. Nothing is more untrue than the assertion that food cooked by gas tastes of gas. It is like the old idea that fish must be watery

food because they live in the water, and has absolutely no foundation in fact. For a long time I had suffered silently from the plain cook—her aggressive manner, her obstinacy, her general impracticability. Having a will of my own, or rather of my wife's, I insisted on introducing fuel-saving kitcheners into my house; but the plain cook circumvented me by burning and breaking them to pieces. At last a moment of release came. After taking solemn counsel, my wife and I agreed to make a clean sweep of the house, and begin again with fresh servants altogether. In the interregnum we were put to strange shifts, the ladies of the family having to cook the meals themselves. Under these circumstances I determined to try cooking by gas, as I had seen it practised at the School of Cookery. The opportunity was favourable. The new cook, when she came, would find a gas cooking apparatus in full blast, and would thus have no chance of opposing "master's new-fangled notions." I bought one of the gas kitcheners made by Leoni and Co., with a reflector and griller attached to the top. In this we succeeded, while waiting for a new cook, in dressing food to perfection. It would almost seem as if the minor work of the plain cook were dispensed with entirely, by the new method of cooking by gas. Our great fear was that the roasting would prove a failure—that the joints would come out pale and sickly-looking, rather baked or "coddled" than roasted, and smacking villainously of gas. Luckily I had secured a ventilating kitchener, in which a thorough draught of air is kept up till the vapour of the meat in process of roasting is driven off. It is to the neglect of proper ventilation that a certain twang of the kitchener is due, and a villainous twang it is; but when the products of gas combustion and the watery exhalations from the joint during the early stages of roasting are carried off, there is not the slightest smack either of the gas or the oven. One great charm of gas-cookery is the absence of dirt, dust, or preparation. After the gas has been lighted for ten minutes, the roasting-chamber, which is of iron lined with tile, is hot enough to receive the joint, which is roasted in the time usually given for the open fire—a quarter of an hour to every pound of meat. Anybody can roast a leg of mutton under these conditions, anybody can bake a pie, and on the rings of flame placed under a grating on the top of the

kitchener, anybody can boil or stew anything. There is never any difficulty in getting the fire to burn, or to burn brightly. It is merely a matter of turning a key, and the fire begins to roast the beef, to bake the pies, to make the soup, to fry the fish, to boil the potatoes, to make the sauce. All these operations can be carried on with a moderately-sized gas-kitchener. The perfection of the roasting is, perhaps, the most remarkable feature of the entire apparatus. Once hung in its place, the joint makes no further demand upon the cook, who can, if it be a very large one, comfortably go to church and get back again in time to cook fish and vegetables for dinner. There is no need for turning, or reversing, or basting, as the work goes steadily on without manual aid, the loss of weight in a joint being very much less than that incurred in roasting at an open fire. In roasting a fowl less butter is required in the inside than under old-fashioned conditions, and the flesh becomes very tender and juicy. In practice we found that the soddened taste of meats baked in an unventilated oven was entirely absent, and that the surface of our joint was beautifully brown and crisp. In fact the experiment proved a complete success.

This perfect roasting power is due partly to the construction of the roasting chamber, and partly to the mode in which the gas is employed. The burner used in the Leoni apparatus is of the kind known as the Bunsen burner, producing the greatest amount of heat with the smallest of light and flare. Gas as consumed in the Bunsen burner is mixed with atmospheric air, and is thoroughly consumed. It burns with a blue instead of a yellow flame, and throws off none of the soot and other products of the combustion of carburetted hydrogen when unmixed with atmospheric air. The same principle of construction prevails in all the Leoni roasters. A ring of these burners extends round the bottom of the roasting chamber, which is lined with porous tiles, separated again by a non-conducting jacket, as it is called, from the iron casing. These tiles absorb and radiate a great quantity of heat, which, prevented from escaping outwardly and thus warming the kitchen instead of cooking the meat, throw the heat upon its surface.

At the first glance it appears improbable that one row of gas-burners placed around the bottom of the roaster can generate heat in such wise as to attack every portion of

the joint equally; but, by the aid of the tile-surfaces, this object is completely attained. When the tiles have become thoroughly heated they may be made to serve another purpose than that of roasting the joint. A tray, containing pies, may be introduced above, and the operations of roasting and baking are thus carried on simultaneously. On the top are, as already described, several rings of the Bunsen burners, and on these all the operations usually performed over charcoal are performed at a great saving of cost and with immense gain in cleanliness. There is, in fact, no reason why any housewife, in the absence of a plain cook, should not do the work herself. The roasting demands absolutely no technical skill, and the art of frying, as well as that of boiling and stewing, may be learnt in an incredibly short space of time. There are many reasons, beside the absolute necessity of sometimes doing the work, why ladies should know how, for instance, to fry a sole. Frying is not an art generally understood by the British plain cook, who is but too apt to send to her master's table a flabby, sticky, broken-backed animal instead of the crisp, golden-hued fried sole procurable in the most modest households of France. Yet it is the easiest thing in the world to produce. The fish only requires to be properly floured, and thrown into a deep frying-pan holding enough boiling lard for it to swim in. To the success of the operation the heat and the quantity of lard are absolutely necessary, and, if present, make it certain. This and many other culinary experiments of an interesting kind may be advantageously worked out on a Leoni kitchener to the great enlightenment and improvement of the female, or, for that matter, male intellect. One half of the difficulty of inducing our daughters to make themselves acquainted with the art culinary is due to the lengthy and tedious preparations for cooking anything at an open fire, the management of that fire, and so forth—all requiring patience and a certain amount of practice. By employing gas as fuel all the tedious preliminaries to cooking are done away with. Frying may be commenced at once and roasting at the expiration of a few minutes after turning on the gas.

I am aware that one objection to cookery by gas is its supposed greater costliness than coals in kitchen-ranges and kitcheners. It is admitted that the actual gas con-

sumed in cooking would cost little enough, but sticklers for old customs yet urge that servants will leave the gas burning long after it has ceased to be useful, and that their wastefulness converts economy into extravagance. The simplest way to prevent this is to have a separate meter for cooking. Servants, knowing that their carelessness, instead of being lost sight of in the confusion of the cooking and lighting account, will be revealed immediately by the tell-tale, then condescend to turn off the cooking-gas when cooking is over, and the result is a considerable saving in cost. How great this really is may be learned of Mr. Whiteley of Westbourne-grove, and at the London Hospital, where the apparatus I have described has been in operation for some time past. At Whiteley's the daily cooking for twelve hundred people is effected by gas at a cost of five shillings and threepence, and an annual saving of fuel and weight of meat effected of about eight hundred pounds sterling. More than four hundred a year has also been saved at the London Hospital. In smaller establishments the saving is proportionately smaller; but it is worth thinking of at a time like the present, when all are compelled to cut down their expenses.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER X. FROZEN SEED.

AND so the Reverend Reginald Gaveston had renewed acquaintance with his cousin, the countess, after all.

But he was not best pleased with the manner of it. In effect, with the best intentions, he had managed to make a fool of himself, and was obliged to tell himself so, without leaving out epithets or mincing words, while he drove back in the fly with Celia to Deepweald. Now the curate of St. Anselm's had a special objection to feeling like a fool, because he was haunted by the modest consciousness that he was, in truth, not over-wise; his principal trouble had always been that the ladies of Deepweald, at least, till he married one of them, had persistently overrated him, estimating him against every passive protest on his part, as if an Oxford degree meant necessarily a double first, and a handsome curate a walking dictionary. Nevertheless, when a townful of ladies

obstinately insists on calling a man clever, gallantry alone obliges him to accept their opinion, and to act up to his label. And when even a man's wife, who ought to know best, believes that she would live in Lambeth Palace if brains had their due, what can he do but believe? But absolute self-belief is a difficult article in the creed of a naturally modest man, who knows what plucking means, and has never been able to fix his views about the Mahratta War. And now he had mistaken a foreign singing woman for his own cousin Alicia, Countess of Quorne. Worse—he had an uncomfortable knowledge that it was through him that Deepweald had been filled with lying rumours, or rather scandals, of the real great lady; how she drank beer in village ale-houses, sang songs to the yokels, and wore somebody else's hair. He had never told such stories himself to a soul but his wife Bessy; but there they were, running about to shame him. Nay, he had said—to Bessy—that Alicia, Countess of Quorne, was not a fit and proper person for an honest woman to know. He felt crushed with guilty responsibility, as he sat back in the fly, and forgot the presence of the girl who sat beside him.

He had lived long enough in Deepweald to feel, with its natives proper, that the real world of practical life was exactly commensurate with the cathedral shadow; that scandal elsewhere was a name, but here, a living power. He had a dim belief that there was an offence known to the law as *scandalum magnatum*; the phrase was as mysteriously resonant, as the no less terrible word "*simony*" was to the Irish orange-woman, who confessed it to her amazed priest, that she might, at any rate, know its meaning. But, in any case, it was bad enough for him to look forward to the time, when the chance presence of Lady Quorne in Deepweald would convict him of being an impostor—of being so little of a walking dictionary, as not even to know the colour of his own cousin's hair. What would Bessy say? He almost felt as if he had married her on false pretences.

"Celia," he asked, "do you know—did you hear—how long Lord Quorne means to stay at Hinchford?"

Perhaps they might be going away immediately, and then they might not go back for a year. In that case, the scandal might die a natural death; in any case, its author might hope that his original con-

nection with it would be confused and forgotten among the Dorcas meetings, and other exciting events of that lively city.

"No," said Celia, waking from her own doleful reverie, "I didn't hear. They all talked about coming to the cathedral next Sunday."

"The De——!" He checked himself just in time. But had he been guilty of the second syllable, he could have pleaded good, natural cause. If the countess and the singing woman appeared in the cathedral side by side, while the scandal was still raw, what was to become of him?

But, full as he was of his own troubles, there was a forlorn note in Celia's "No" that touched him; for in his heart he was no fool.

"Come," he said, "you have done a good morning's work, any way, I—I knew it would be a good thing for you to know Lady Quorne. And Clari is one of the first singers of the day; she sings at the opera and at Exeter Hall. By-the-way, now I remember," he said, feeling his forehead grow damp at this crowning proof of stupidity, "I heard her in Deepweald some years ago. Of course, it is a great thing for her to have heard you; that was more than I expected. March will be pleased, I should say."

"Mr. Gaveston," began Celia, nervously.

"Well?"

"Pray—please don't tell my father that I have seen—her!"

He looked down at her face and saw tears in her eyes.

"Not tell your father?"

"That I have seen Clari."

"But why?"

"Because I ask you. Please don't let him know that I have met Clari."

"Of course I won't if you wish it. Ah, you want to tell him yourself, I suppose. But don't forget to tell him how well she said you sang. We shall be having you another Clari one of these days, and singing in the Shire Hall. Lady Quorne can do what she likes with all the musical people. Of course I mean you'll be another Clari in the right way, you understand. Her ways are not very ladylike, from all I hear; though my cousin Alicia wouldn't have her at Hinchford, I'm sure, if there were any real harm. Here is your door, Miss March. Or will you come and take tea with Mrs. Gaveston and see little Bessy? I made my lunch at Hinchford my early dinner, you know, and Mrs. Gaveston will

have had hers at one. No? Then tell your father from me that Lady Quorne is very much pleased with you indeed."

"Thank you for all your kindness, Mr. Gaveston."

"Thank you, Miss March, for some charming singing and a pleasant drive." And so they parted—the curate to find comfort for scandalum magnatum in a cup of tea, Celia to face her father with a double weight on her mind—that she had both sung to Clari and had spoken to Walter Gordon.

The musician, who had to thank himself for having lost his daughter's confidence, was not, as usual, bent over his desk. He was indulging in the inconceivable sloth of smoking without working; and either weariness or less intense mental strain than usual had given his features some little relaxation from their chronic harshness, though but very little. Perhaps it might have been some effect of the summer air of evening, always exceptionally sweet and peaceful in that cathedral-close; for the machine must have had a heart somewhere for a mainspring.

"Celia," he said, as she came into the room; beginning, as always when he had something to say to her, with her name, followed by an emphatic pause. She was familiar enough with the common form, but this evening it seemed to have a new and special solemnity. But then, ever since he had grown deaf, he had thrown increasing weight on every word and every pause, as if determined that not in the least thing would he be conquered by infirmity before he was compelled.

"Celia," he repeated, "I am no longer organist at Deepweald Cathedral. The whole matter was brought to an end yesterday. The dean and chapter are of opinion that a musician ought to have ears; and I take the same view. I don't exactly know whether I have resigned, or whether I have been dismissed; they have given me a great many regrets and compliments, and my salary in lieu of notice, and have appointed my successor. Perhaps you know him; his name is Lucas, and he must have been at Lindenheim with you. I hope he is a little better than most of them, for the sake of the organ. I have a sort of feeling that it will miss me, after twenty years."

Conversation between Celia and her father had to be one-sided, as she never used her pencil but to answer questions, and otherwise could only answer with her

eyes. Perhaps it was this training that made them grow so eloquent, as they were becoming ever since her chance meeting with Walter Gordon. She remembered Lucas; he had been present at Waaren. Lindenheim was spreading out into the world.

"And, Celia, as it happens, the salary they have paid me, I reckon, will last exactly till my work is done. I have not been troubled with services or pupils of late, you know." He spoke indifferently of what Celia knew only too well. "When it is done—but it will take care of itself, then. Yes; the score is very nearly finished now—really finished, with as much mind and strength in it as God gave me; without one note too much, or not as it ought to be. I suppose nothing is perfect; but, at any rate, I have given it my all, and no man can do more. I don't say it is the greatest work of the future, because the future of Art is all eternity; but it is the first work that contains the whole life of a man. I have never talked of it even to you, Celia. I don't fancy that Prometheus talked about the man he was making. But very soon my part in it will be done, and then yours will begin. You may not have the finest voice in the whole world, but you can sing; you have been set aside for the work and have been kept pure from all evil. Yes; I see light now, and I shall not refuse the glory, this time, when it comes. I think I have earned my reward."

Celia had never heard her father make such a speech before. The loss of his situation seemed an accident of life not worth regarding, in the face of the great fact that the work, to which he had sacrificed all life, was at last nearly done. His finding time to rest and talk was like the relaxation of an oarsman's muscles, when the heavy, hopeless-looking sea has at last been pulled through, and only the last surf lies between him and smooth water. Or it was like the lingering over work that has become a second nature, which comes on us like an instinct of warning, that we work after all for work's sake, and not for its end. It is never with unmixed relief or pure pleasure that we write the word *Finis* after anything, though what is ended may be labour or pain. But now, when the end was in sight but not yet attained, the musician was free to rest—say for an hour. As to Celia herself, the end of the score was

not a thing to be realised, any more than the end of the world. Of course we know that the world will come to an end—some day. At any rate we say so. But to realise an end one must remember a beginning; and Celia remembered no beginning, either of the world or of the score. What she did realise was that if the salary paid her father on dismissal was to last till the end of the score, it must either be the purse of Fortunatus or the widow's cruse. Like Noëmi before her, Celia could not manage to sever Art from finance; she wanted no diamonds, but she had already learned one lesson in life—that housekeeping, even in Deepweald, requires money.

"Lucas is in no hurry for the house for a week or so," said her father, still indifferent to the trifles that make up life for others.

"The house!" exclaimed Celia, forgetting her father's deafness. But he had heard her in his own way—with his eyes.

"Of course. This is the residence of the cathedral organist for the time being. Never mind that; Deepweald has served my turn."

"We—leave—Deepweald?" wrote Celia, hurriedly. It is hard to have to find a pencil and scrap of paper in some out-of-the-way pocket every time one feels an emotion.

"Why—do you suppose the work is to be brought out in the Shire Hall?"

No wonder that the deaf find life harder to bear than the blind. They, alone, are cut off from confidence and sympathy, or, at least, from those best confidences that come as impulses, and the meeting of souls that speak with the audible voice, though not in any words that can be written down. They have to read all their living books by the sorry makeshift of translation into symbols of voices and signs of words. Unless she were both poet and improvisatrice, what was Celia to do?

How could she write down for him, when she could not even tell herself, all that leaving Deepweald meant to her? There was no sound reason why it should mean anything whatever. Deepweald had been nothing but a prison-house for her childhood; the only life she had ever known had been the three short years she had spent away from it; her return to it had been the renewal of pain and trouble doubled by the power to be conscious of them that her short season of life had

given her. She ought to have hated Deepweald, and have felt her wings spreading again at the thought of flying away, even though escape might mean tenfold trouble. And yet, who ever quite welcomed change when the change took actual and immediate form? The most aspiring and rebellious oyster, if there be such a thing in nature, would not part from its shell without pain; and there was a great deal of the oyster about Celia March, without the aspiration or the rebellion. She knew that if she could have chosen her own life, it would be to go on living in peace and quiet, under the familiar shadow, listening to the rooks caw; and, if she thought of companionship under the name of Walter Gordon—she knew it by no other—that dream was forbidden, and she had been trained to acquiesce easily. She had grown up under the gray cathedral tower till she had grown into it, and her life had put out ivy-roots. The elms in The Close were unlike all other trees and had living souls. The rooks had cawed to her in her cradle. And now she was holding to all this hitherto unrealised reality of her life on sufferance; in weeks, it might be days, she would have to make a plunge into the cold sea of untried life elsewhere, which is so strangely like having to make the untried plunge out of life altogether. In short, Celia had grown sentimental—perhaps in the air of Lindenheim.

She looked through the open window, and never had she seemed to see The Close and all it contained as she saw it now. It is a strange kind of revelation, when one first sees consciously what all one's days one has been seeing unconsciously. That is the keenest feeling in deaths and partings. When the sun set, the cathedral tower always blushed over its gray stones. She had seen the blush a thousand times, and yet never till this evening; and now, all at once, she saw it the thousand times. The returning rooks cawed to her heart through her ears, and her ivy roots felt strained.

"Do—we—leave—before—Sunday?" she wrote.

"No. There is no need to hurry. Well, I suppose it is natural that you should be impatient; we shall leave as soon as we can. Before Sunday week, any way."

"I—want—something—before—we—go."

"Well?"

She had never asked her father for any-

thing before. Perhaps, for once, it was easier to write her request than speak it.

"Will—you—play—the—organ—the—last—Sunday?"

"I? When I am dismissed for being too deaf for the people to hear me?"

"I—don't—want—you—to—play—to—the—people. I—want—you—to—play—to—me."

He looked at her suddenly. He had buried sentiment underground ages ago, but any gardener would laugh at the notion of putting a root under the soil out of sight in order not to make it grow.

"Yes," he said sharply, almost fiercely.

"If you please, I will play" once more. They shall see which they like best—a man who hears or a man who knows."

She looked her thanks, and did not write them. To leave tower, elms, and rooks, without the organ-music that had been the inmost soul of them, would have been too hard. Now she was a great deal more than thankful. She felt that for once some thought in her heart had been understood, and that there was even a chance of active sympathy between herself and her father. Had she not been thinking too much of herself lately? She asked herself as reproachfully as if the question could possibly be decided against her. Her whole heart went out to him—a lonely, deaf musician, with harsh and repulsive ways, with no life but what he beat, in solitude, out of his brain with hammer-blows, no visible power of loving, and no love save such as she could make for him. Like the tower, she seemed to see him also for the first time.

Somehow, she knew not how so unprecedented an impulse came, her hand found its way into his, and remained there. She almost fancied that it was held. It was the shyest caress on one side, the coldest on the other; and yet it was more to her than if he had taken her in his arms. She had never felt so unhappy in her whole life before, and never so happy; not even in those old peaceful times when she knew nothing, felt nothing, and loved no one.

"Good evening, Miss March," said a well-known voice at the open window, where a passer-by might make a flying call without knocking. It was Mr. Swann, of course; and he nodded to her father while he spoke to her. "I've heard all about it; I've just been to Bessy's, and she told me all about Lady Quorne—my son-in-law's cousin, you know. That was an uncommon good notion of mine; it's

some good for one's friends, having one's daughter married to a countess's cousin. So your fortune's as good as made. Your father's pretty well? He must get the best advice up in London. They may say what they like, but I only hope the new man will turn out half as good as the old one. He must be pretty good, I can tell you, for us Deepweald folk to take to him after your father. March hasn't been sociable, but we're used to him, you see, and proud of him. So I hear we're going to have your new friends at the cathedral next Sunday—my lady, and Madame Clara, and all. The new man'll have to play himself in before all the city."

"My father will play next Sunday—the last we are here," said Celia, her cheeks burning.

"Ah? Then there's another piece of news! But I'm glad of it—deaf or not, it'll be for the credit of the city. Does he know who will be there?"

"No," said Celia, hotly. She had clean forgotten the excursion from Hinchford, when she had made her request; but it was not in her to commit sacrilege against new-born sympathy, by keeping even this secret down.

Her father, as if to hide his infirmity, always sat down to his desk, and affected absorption in pressing work before a visitor. He had done so now, and was sitting with his back turned to Celia and Mr. Swann. So far as he was concerned, the secret might keep itself for ever, without helping. But Mr. Swann wrote something on the back of an old letter with his gold pencil-case, and threw it on to the writing-table.

"Give us something good next Sunday," he read. "A word to the wise—we're to have Lady Quorne and Madame Clara. Play out with a flourish—that's the way."

The organist turned round towards the window, where Mr. Swann stood nodding and smiling. He gave the message to Celia. "What does he mean? Who is Madame Clara?"

"He means Clari," said Celia. "She is staying at Hinchford, and——"

"Celia, you have been at Hinchford!" The poor bud of sympathy seemed all at once to shrivel away in frost. "Don't answer me. Good Heaven! Is rebellion born with you? But—it's no use talking, or hoping, or trying—— Yes, but it

shall be! When the work is done, follow your——be what you are made, but not one moment before. Good-night, Mr. Swann. Thank you for your news."

"Perhaps it's as well the next time is to be the last," thought the auctioneer. "It'll never do to have a deaf organist, who's cracked into the bargain. Poor girl!"

"Father," said Celia, "I have been to Hinchford with Mr. Gaveston. I have seen Lady Quorne, and Walter Gordon, and Mademoiselle Clari."

She spoke the words, without thinking, before she wrote them down. And, though her cheeks grew pale at the terrible confession, she spoke firmly. There was little credit in admitting a half-discovered fault, but she felt brave.

"Then Lady Quorne, and Walter Gordon, and—and—the rest of them must hear the first of Lucas on Sunday instead of the first of me. I will not be robbed of my labour a second time. I am too old to throw away five-and-twenty years. We leave Deepweald to-morrow, Celia. Make no difficulties. Bring me my score."

And so, for Celia, ended life at Deepweald. To-morrow, with John March, meant to-morrow, as surely as to-day meant to-day. If he was mad, it was with a terrible consistency, that the sanest auctioneer in Deepweald might envy him. And if Clari had any other than æsthetic or pious motives in making an excursion to the cathedral, she might just as well have kept her habit of sleeping till nearly noon unbroken. By the time she arrived at the south porch with Walter Gordon, Lucas was playing the voluntary, and the organ answered to the strength of its master no more.

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XV. "DROP IT."

FOR ten or twelve days after the little dinner in Berkeley-square, Guss Mildmay bore her misfortunes without further spoken complaint. During all that time, though they were both in London, she never saw Jack De Baron, and she knew that in not seeing her he was neglecting her. But for so long she bore it. It is generally supposed that young ladies have to bear such sorrow without loud complaint; but Guss was more thoroughly emancipated than are some young ladies, and when moved was wont to speak her mind. At last, when she herself was only on foot with her father, she saw Jack De Baron riding with Lady George. It is quite true that she also saw, riding behind them, her perfidious friend, Mrs. Houghton, and a gentleman whom at that time she did not know to be Lady George's father. This was early in March, when equestrians in the Park are not numerous. Guss stood for a moment looking at them, and Jack De Baron took off his hat. But Jack did not stop, and went on talking with that pleasant vivacity which she, poor girl, knew so well and valued so highly. Lady George liked it too, though she could hardly have given any reason for liking it, for, to tell the truth, there was not often much pith in Jack's conversation.

On the following morning Captain De Baron, who had lodgings in Charles-street close to the Guards' Club, had a letter brought to him before he was out of bed. The letter was from Guss Mildmay, and he knew the handwriting well. He had

received many notes from her, though none so interesting on the whole as was this letter. It was written, certainly, with a swift pen, and, but that he knew her writing well, would in parts have been hardly legible.

"I think you are treating me very badly. I tell you openly and fairly. It is neither gentlemanlike or high-spirited, as you know that I have no one to take my part but myself. If you mean to cut me, say so, and let me understand it at once. You have taken up now with that young married woman, just because you know it will make me angry. I don't believe for a moment that you really care for such a baby-faced chit as that. I have met her too, and I know that she hasn't a word to say for herself. Do you mean to come and see me? I expect to hear from you, letting me know when you will come. I do not intend to be thrown over for her or anyone. I believe it is mostly Adelaide's doing, who doesn't like to think that you should really care for anyone. You know very well what my feelings are, and what sacrifice I am ready to make. And you know what you have told me of yourself. I shall be at home all this afternoon. Papa, of course, will go to his club at three. Aunt Julia has an afternoon meeting at the Institute for the distribution of prizes among the Rights-of-Women young men, and I have told her positively that I won't go. Nobody else will be admitted. Do come, and at any rate let us have it out. This state of things will kill me—though, of course, you don't mind that. G.

"I shall think you a coward if you don't come. Oh, Jack, do come!"

She had begun like a lion, but had

ended like a lamb; and such was the nature of every thought she had respecting him. She was full of indignation. She assured herself hourly, that such treachery as his deserved death. She longed for a return of the old times—thirty years since—and for some old-fashioned brother, so that Jack might be shot at, and have a pistol-bullet in his heart. And yet she told herself as often that she could not live without him. Where should she find another Jack, after her recklessness in letting all the world know that this man was her Jack? She hardly wanted to marry him, knowing full well the nature of the life which would then be before her. Jack had told her often that if forced to do that he must give up the army and go and live in—he had named Dantzic as having the least alluring sound of any place he knew. To her it would be best that things should go on just as they were now, till something should turn up. But that she should be enthralled and Jack free was not to be borne! She begrudged him no other pleasure. She was willing that he should hunt, gamble, eat, drink, smoke, and be ever so wicked, if that were his taste; but not that he should be seen making himself agreeable to another young woman. It might be that their position was unfortunate, but of that misfortune she had by far the heavier share. She could not eat, drink, smoke, gamble, hunt, and be generally wicked. Surely he might bear it if she could.

Jack, when he had read the letter, tossed it on to the counterpane, and rolled himself again in bed. It was not as yet much after nine, and he need not decide for an hour or two whether he would accept the invitation or not. But the letter bothered him, and he could not sleep. She told him that if he did not come he would be a coward, and he felt that she had told him the truth. He did not want to see her—not because he was tired of her, for in her softer humours she was always pleasant to him—but because he had a clear insight into the misery of the whole connection. When the idea of marrying her suggested itself, he always regarded it as being tantamount to suicide. Were he to be persuaded to such a step, he would simply be blowing his own brains out because someone else asked him to do so. He had explained all this to her at various times when suggesting Dantzic, and she had agreed

with him. Then, at that point, his common sense had been better than hers, and his feeling really higher. "That being so," he had said, "it is certainly for your advantage that we should part." But this to her had been as though he were striving to break his own chains, and was indifferent as to her misery. "I can take care of myself," she had answered him. But he knew that she could not take care of herself. Had she not been most unwise, most imprudent, she would have seen the wisdom of letting the intimacy of their acquaintance drop without any further explanation. But she was most unwise. Nevertheless, when she accused him of cowardice, must he not go?

He breakfasted uncomfortably, trying to put off the consideration, and then uncomfortably sauntered down to the Guard House, at St. James's. He had no intention of writing, and was therefore not compelled to make up his mind, till the hour named for the appointment should actually have come. He thought for awhile that he would write her a long letter, full of good sense; explaining to her that it was impossible that they should be useful to each other; and that he found himself compelled, by his regard for her, to recommend that their peculiar intimacy should be brought to an end. But he knew that such a letter would go for nothing with her—that she would regard it simply as an excuse on his part. They two had tacitly agreed not to be bound by common sense, not to be wise. Such tacit agreements are common enough between men, between women, and between men and women. "What! a sermon from you! No, indeed; not that." Jack felt all this, felt that he could not preach without laying himself open to ridicule. When the time came he made up his mind that he must go. Of course it was very bad for her. The servants would all know it. Everybody would know it. She was throwing away every chance she had of doing well for herself. But what was he to do? She told him that he would be a coward, and he at any rate could not bear that.

Mr. Mildmay lived in a small house in Green-street, very near the Park, but still a modest, unassuming, cheap little house. Jack De Baron knew the way to it well, and was there not above a quarter of an hour after the appointed time.

"So Aunt Ju has gone to the Rights of Women, has she?" he said, after his first greeting. He might have kissed her if he

would, but he didn't. He had made up his mind about that. And so had she. She was ready for him, whether he should kiss her or not, ready to accept either greeting, as though it was just that which she had expected.

"Oh yes; she is going to make a speech herself."

"But why do they give prizes to young men?"

"Because the young men have stood up for the old women. Why don't you go and get a prize?"

"I had to be here instead."

"Had to be here, sir!"

"Yes, Guss; had to be here! Isn't that about it? When you tell me to come, and tell me that I am a coward if I don't come, of course I am here."

"And now you are here, what have you got to say for yourself?" This she attempted to say easily and jauntily.

"Not a word."

"Then I don't see what is the use of coming."

"Nor I either. What would you have me say?"

"I would have you—I would have you——" And then there was something like a sob. It was quite real. "I would have you tell me—that you—love me."

"Have I not told you so a score of times; and what has come of it?"

"But is it true?"

"Come, Guss, this is simple folly. You know it is true; and you know, also, that there is no good to be got from such truth."

"If you love me, you would like—to—see me."

"No, I shouldn't—no, I don't—unless it could lead to something. There was a little fun to be had when we could spoon together, when I hardly knew how to ask for it, and you hardly knew how to grant it; when it was a little shooting bad, and had to be nursed by smiles and pretty speeches. But there are only three things it can come to now. Two are impossible, and therefore there is the other."

"What are the three?"

"We might get married."

"Well?"

"One of the three I shall not tell you. And we might—make up our minds to forget it all. Do what the people call, part. That is what I suggest."

"So that you may spend your time in riding about with Lady George Germain."

"That is nonsense, Guss. Lady George Germain I have seen three times, and she

talks only about her husband; a pretty little woman more absolutely in love I never came across."

"Pretty little fool!"

"Very likely. I have nothing to say against that. Only, when you have no heavier stone to throw against me than Lady George Germain, really you are badly off for weapons."

"I have stones enough, if I chose to throw them. Oh, Jack!"

"What more is there to be said?"

"Have you had enough of me already, Jack?"

"I should not have had half enough of you, if either you or I had fifty thousand pounds."

"If I had them I would give them all to you."

"And I to you. That goes without telling. But as neither of us have got the money, what are we to do? I know what we had better not do. We had better not make each other unhappy by what people call recriminations."

"I don't suppose that anything I say can affect your happiness."

"Yes it does; very much. It makes me think of deep rivers and high columns, of express trains and prussic acid. Well, as we have known each other, you have never found out how unfortunately soft I am."

"Very soft!"

"I am. This troubles me so that I ride over awfully big places, thinking that I might perhaps be lucky enough to break my neck."

"What must I feel, who have no way of amusing myself at all?"

"Drop it. I know it is a hard thing for me to say. I know it will sound heartless. But I am bound to say so. It is for your sake. I can't hurt myself. It does me no harm that everybody knows that I am philandering after you; but it is the very deuce for you." She was silent for a moment. Then he said again emphatically, "Drop it."

"I can't drop it," she said through her tears.

"Then what are we to do?" As he asked this question, he approached her and put his arm round her waist. This he did in momentary vacillating mercy, not because of the charm of the thing to himself, but through his own inability not to give her some token of affection.

"Marry," she said, in a whisper.

"And go and live at Dantzic for the rest of our lives!" He did not speak

these words, but such was the exclamation which he at once made internally to himself. If he had resolved on anything, he had resolved that he would not marry her. "One might sacrifice oneself," he had said to himself, "if one could do her any good; but what's the use of sacrificing both?" He withdrew his arm from her, and stood a yard apart from her, looking into her face. "That would be so horrible to you!" she said.

"It would be horrible to have nothing to eat."

"We should have seven hundred and fifty pounds a year," said Guss, who had made her calculations very narrowly.

"Well, yes; and no doubt we could get enough to eat at such a place as Dantzic."

"Dantzic! you always laugh at me when I speak seriously."

"Or Lubeck, if you like it better; or Leipsic. I shouldn't care the least in the world where we went. I know a chap who lives in Minorca because he has not got any money. We might go to Minorca, only the mosquitoes would eat you up."

"Will you do it? I will if you will." They were standing now three yards apart, and Guss was looking terrible things. She did not endeavour to be soft, but had made up her mind as to the one step that must be taken. She would not lose him. They need not be married immediately. Something might turn up before any date was fixed for their marriage. If she could only bind him by an absolute promise that he would marry her some day! "I will if you will," she said again, after waiting a second or two for his answer. Then he shook his head. "You will not, after all that you have said to me?" He shook his head again. "Then, Jack De Baron, you are perjured, and no gentleman."

"Dear Guss, I can bear that. It is not true, you know, as I have never made you any promise which I am not ready to keep; but still I can bear it."

"No promise! Have you not sworn that you loved me?"

"A thousand times."

"And what does that mean from a gentleman to a lady?"

"It ought to mean matrimony and all that kind of thing, but it never did mean it with us. You know how it all began."

"I know what it has come to, and that you owe it to me as a gentleman to let me decide whether I am able to encounter such a life or not. Though it were absolute de-

struction, you ought to face it if I bid you."

"If it were destruction for myself only—perhaps yes. But though you have so little regard for my happiness, I still have some for yours. It is not to be done. You and I have had our little game, as I said before, and now we had better put the rackets down and go and rest ourselves."

"What rest? Oh, Jack, what rest is there?"

"Try somebody else."

"Can you tell me to do that!"

"Certainly I can. Look at my cousin Adelaide."

"Your cousin Adelaide never cared for any human being in her life except herself. She had no punishment to suffer as I have. Oh, Jack! I do so love you." Then she rushed at him, and fell upon his bosom, and wept.

He knew that would come, and he felt that, upon the whole, this was the worst part of the performance. He could bear her anger or her sullenness with fortitude, but her lachrymose caresses were insupportable. He held her, however, in his arms, and gazed at himself in the pier-glass, most uncomfortably, over her shoulder. "Oh, Jack," she said, "oh, Jack—what is to come next?" His face became somewhat more lugubrious than before, but he said not a word. "I cannot lose you altogether. There is no one else in the wide world that I care for. Papa thinks of nothing but his whist. Aunt Ju, with her 'Rights of Women,' is an old fool."

"Just so," said Jack, still holding her, and still looking very wretched.

"What shall I do if you leave me?"

"Pick up someone who has a little money. I know it sounds bad and mercenary, and all that, but in our way of life there is nothing else to be done. We can't marry like the ploughboy and milkmaid?"

"I could."

"And would be the first to find out your mistake afterwards. It's all very well saying that Adelaide hasn't got a heart. I daresay she has as much heart as you or me."

"As you—as you."

"Very well. Of course you have a sort of pleasure in abusing me. But she has known what she could do, and what she could not. Every year, as she grows older, she will become more comfortable. Houghton is very good to her, and she has lots of money to spend. If that's heartlessness, there's a good deal to be said for

it." Then he gently disembarassed himself of her arms, and placed her on a sofa.

"And this is to be the end?"

"Well—I think so, really." She thumped her hand upon the head of the sofa as a sign of her anger. "Of course we shall always be friends?"

"Never," she almost screamed.

"We'd better. People will talk less about it, you know."

"I don't care what people talk. If they knew the truth, no one would ever speak to you again."

"Good-bye, Guss." She shook her head, as he had shaken his before. "Say a word to a fellow." Again she shook her head. He attempted to take her hand, but she withdrew it. Then he stood for perhaps a minute looking at her, but she did not move. "Good-bye, Guss," he said again, and then he left the room.

When he got into the street he congratulated himself. He had undergone many such scenes before, but none which seemed so likely to bring the matter to an end. He was rather proud of his own conduct, thinking that he had been at the same time both tender and wise. He had not given way in the least, and had yet been explicit in assuring her of his affection. He felt now that he would go and hunt on the morrow without any desire to break his neck over the baron's fences. Surely the thing was done now for ever and ever! Then he thought how it would have been with him at this moment, had he in any transient weakness told her that he would marry her. But he had been firm, and could now walk along with a light heart.

She, as soon as he had left her, got up, and taking the cushion off the sofa, threw it to the farther end of the room. Having so relieved herself, she walked up to her own chamber.

SKIN-DEEP IN BERMONDSEY.

THE Bermondsey Skin Market is not—nice. As it is approached, it issues no invitation to approach nearer. On the contrary, it seems to say: "Get elsewhere! Get to the Thames, it is hard by; get to Wapping-old-stairs; to King Edward's-stairs, a short pull lower; to King James's-stairs, lower still; to Ratcliff-cross, lower once more; to the Three Mariners'-stairs; to the Hermitage-dock; to the Horse-ferry; to the Pageant's-stairs, for a royal view; to Pitcher's-point; to Duke-shore;

to Acorn-wharf; to Brown's-quay; to Morris's-causeway; to Randall's-rents; get, in short, somewhere that is anywhere, so that it is not here!" For, amidst odd, and not fragrant surroundings, stands the Bermondsey Skin Market. Near it, for one item, there are thickly-populated rows of houses with no pavement before them, but mud side-walks, well-trodden into holes and tripping-up places, in its stead. Near it, for item number two, there are thickly-populated rows of houses with all pavement before them; the same being short, slabbed courts, with no roadway whatever, and so pinched and narrow, that neighbours coming out of opposite doorways at the same moment must run foul of one another to a certainty, and rude collision be the result. And near it, for item the last, there are yard-gates that, left ajar, show skins, and horns, and fleece, and "trotters," in not the most sightly heaping; and there are pitched and tarred timber tanneries, well-nigh cathedral-sized, displaying, through their open sides, rails upon rails of russet-coloured hides hung up for drying, and letting these rails upon rails of russet-coloured hides throw out their pungent scent from noon till noon again, ever impregnating, unpalatably, the heavy air.

Thus the Bermondsey Skin Market is not likely to be—nice. Yet to mark it out as particularly the reverse of nice, would be doing it manifest injustice. What cleanliness can do, it has; what neatness can do, it has; what strict formality and order, combined with precise commercial concentration and despatch, can do, it has also. It owes much, too, to its architecture; and to its area, or space. Lying a double long oval, it consists of nothing more than this double long oval—of a covered and paved colonnade, round an open and paved courtyard. Affording a long, clear, sweeping view and passage from one end to the other of the paved walk under shelter, it affords equally a wide, clear, sweeping drive round, or crossing over from any part to the other of the clattering centre bared to the sky. It is true a railway-van may rattle in, and, rumbling through one of the three or four wide cuts that are the entrances, may rattle still from pillar to pillar of the colonnade, waking as many echoes as an old voiture shambling through an old French town. It is only a railway-van, complete and orderly; a mere speck on the pure plainness and simplicity when it has ceased its

rattling, and is standing, meekly stationary, to unload. And it is nothing that new-built and stately hop-warehouses form a high barricade near by, in company with leather warehouses co-born, and quite as stately. Nothing, either, that the handsome red-brick exchange of the Skin Market itself stands at the river-end only just through; that poverty and squalor are left behind by passage in, the far-east way, under a whitewashed archway of the clean-kept hostelry, appropriately named The Fleece—Simon the Tanner being within hail-call, and The Tanner's Arms at the other side. The points are all outside the market, beyond the market, are not in any way the market itself, since they have to be turned from to get into it, and since it is only when they have been turned from that it is possible to get into it, and that it can be seen—the plain, clear, spacious, double-long-oval has been described to be, with only its own openness and bareness, its own cool gloom and grimness, to meet the eye from end to end.

And then, as for detail, it is of the smallest possible. Opening deeper in under the dark depth of the deep colonnade, are occasional flat, dull doors, leading to small dark offices for the salesmen's clerks; here and there, breaking the dark depth of the deep colonnade, is a slim, dull, wooden watch-box, tight-closed, for the safe custody of the salesmen's weights, scales, brooms, pails. And there is absolutely nothing more. Keep the eyes at their own level, therefore, raise them to anything above their level—be it sky, be it roofing, be it entrance leading to vast ornamental clock—let them even drop so far down lower than their level, they shall take in everything that is as much as a span's height above the ground; and the Bermondsey Skin Market is as fair as any other market, and might be visited by the daintiest lady in the land. But let the eyes be cast to the very pavement, be cast upon what is lying there, flat, prone, where the feet tread, and where the feet are obliged to tread, and there will come a shock. Skins. Skins, necessarily. Skins, too, that are alive; at the least, that are just as they have been stripped off, or flayed; so blood oozes from them; blood keeps on oozing; with the washing of the pavements to purify, only mingling with it, and making it seem more. It makes it impossible to see, and not recoil. Besides, it is entirely unexpected. It is a

skin market—true. It is built, kept, rented, made a resort, on purpose for skins to be brought into it; for skins to be weighed, and judged, and handled there; for skins to be taken by the waggon-load away. Yet skins, in one sense, are prepared merchandise, with gloss, and curing, and finish, and agreeable aroma. If this was so, skins, as a term, might have meant scarlet-edged tiger-rugs, finished for art; might have meant lion trophies and leopard trophies, as fair, and rare, and regal, closely competing; might have meant the pale, maize, useful "shammy;" the legal parchment; the sable, squirrel, seal, the genet, monkey, fox, for ladies' winter warmth and ornamentation. Continuing upon this hint, too, skins might have meant goat, rabbit, cat—this last must have defined demand and marts, known to an understratum of commercialists; it might have meant rat for gloves, to fit the Parisian legend; it might have meant all of these, and more, in neat hanging strings of them, or in tied bundles, with the addition of layers upon layers of morocco, roan, shoulders, of horse-hide, porpoise, buffalo, and the rest, all tanned, and dyed, and polished, ready for the prosaic purposes of business generally; when, if skins had had this meaning, there would have been the beauty of infinite variety in them; there would have been choice of suppleness, substance, length, colour; in the range from jet black to pure snow; through golden browns and silver grays; through fawn and bay, and cuir and cream; through spot, and stripe, and taw-niness, and duskiness, and brindle; and the Bermondsey Skin Market might have been a focus for students in tint and lustre, and no unsuggestive place for an artistic lounge. But the expectation of anything of this could only have come from the most absurd misunderstanding and miscalculation. Skins, within the precincts of the Bermondsey Skin Market, are skins with which meat-salesmen and butchers are in intimate and direct connection; they are from lambs, sheep, calves, bullocks; they are sent in for sale raw, sent also, as soon as possible after slaughter; this leaves them limp, and moist, and stained, and unsightly, and—there they are. As for the manner of their lying, they are doubled each one flat in half; they are laid, each one, flat upon the flags; they are folded, each one, flat and flat, together and together, an inch away, and an inch, and an inch, as

sheets of paper are folded to get their tones of shading; and they lie, heads to the wall, tails to the kerb, in exact precision, like a herd of living animals, straightly penned, and seen in long perspective from a distant view. The bullocks' horns are on the bullocks' skins, to help to this similitude (they peel off with the skin, and lie with only a mockery of their peril in them, after a clatter on the stones); the sheep's trotters are remaining on the sheep; and there is a trotter here, a trotter there, on the open yard, in the narrow kennel, detached accidentally from the skin on which it has been brought, dusty as is all litter, and soiled and stained from the poor sheep's own recent footing it over road and sheep-walk, meadow and soft moor. Bullocks' trotters, to invert these items—that is, bullocks' feet and hoofs—are absent from the market; so are sheep's horns—in sober words, all outlines or hints of sheep's heads. It is for proper commendable and commercial reasons. Butchers keep these to sell them for food. Cow-heel and calf's-foot jelly are yielded by the one, with ready forgiveness for confusion as to age and the rest; sheep's head, sheep's tongue, sheep's brains, come from the other, with the skin of this last not worth removing, since the breakages in it deprive it of tangible leather value. But, it will be argued, in opposition to this, sheep's trotters are an ordinary article of food; how is it that they are to be found part and parcel of skins, on the wet stones of the colonnade? Again, is it for proper commendable and commercial reasons? Trotters are not meat, technically; they are not sold as meat by meat salesmen and butchers. By some curious necessity, or curious survival of some old custom, these pass into the hands of another class of tradesmen—they who do not sell food till it has been cooked, and who buy of the skin-buyers buying within these precincts, when these skin-buyers have carted their wares home, and have had them sorted into items for separate use or manufacture. And a note must be made of another peculiarity. The skins of bullocks are not, properly speaking, skins at all; they are hides. Included with them, of course, are the hides of oxen, cows, heifers, and so forth; and whilst these are handled and criticised, and bargained for by tanners, the skins of sheep—which are the only skins proper, it is seen, now they have been reduced and limited by technical analysis—have no interest whatever at

this stage for any dealers except those called fellmongers. And there is solid ground for that, also, as may be suspected. A bullock's hide is covered with hair, a sheep's skin is covered with wool; moreover, the chief value of a hide is in the broad and permanent expanse that is itself the pelt, to be metamorphosed after many months of weary and capital-consuming processes into leather. The chief value of a skin is in the pliable and removable portion, the wool, ready the moment after stripping to be passed off the premises for somebody else's interest and manufacture. Naturally, therefore, the dealers in the two commodities must be distinct; they require different appliances, different organisation, different skill. So, also, is there a wide difference between a hide and a skin with regard to price. A hide—always meaning a hide and horns—the medium weight of which is eighty pounds, is worth from eighteen to thirty shillings, with an average of twenty-four; a sheep's skin, for all the wool of it and its other usefulness and almost endless diversity of form and purpose, rarely is to be quoted as being steady at a crown. Of the sorts or 'breeds of cattle there is the singularity that Scotch beasts, which give the best beef, give the worst hides—Runts and Herefords yielding the best; of the sorts or breeds of sheep it is to be noted that the skin itself does not differ so much in either. Price is dependent on the quality and quantity of the wool; and, since this is so, preference is given, on account of length, to the sheep from the Cotswold Hills. In the manner of the commerce of the skin and hide market, it is as simple as the building in which it takes place. Butchers and meat salesmen agree to sell skins—meat salesmen being wholesale dealers who kill hundreds of beasts a day, to retail them as meat to the butchers who have no shambles or accommodation to kill beasts for themselves—skinner or skin salesmen and hide factors agree to buy. The last send their carts round to the slaughter-houses, to collect—being charged with the duty and expense of carrying all that is called hide or skin clean away—and, having collected, they find their profit in the difference between what they give for their wares, in a small or bigger bulk from here and there all over the country, and what they get for their wares when they have them laid out upon the flags, for tanners and fellmongers to come and

choose from by the score. About noon daily, a few clusters of merchants collect together in one bay or another under the colonnade—a bay being as much space as is between pillar and pillar. These merchants are wealthy, for the most part of good dress and bearing; since all that is repelling and unsightly has been done before their arrival, and every item of the neatness and the cleanliness has been arranged in time for them. They stand, sellers and buyers both, in quiet, commercial deliberation, or walk a few steps, and stoop, for better inspection and opinion; and the result of this little much of cheapening and refusal; of proposition and acceptance, is that at the week's end business has been done involving the interchange from hand to hand of thirty thousand or forty thousand pounds. For the rest, when the day's sales are over, a fresh relay of carts rumbles in to carry all the sales away. Such skins as are not sold, and such skins as arrive after selling hours, are left in charge of a watchman, who sits up all night to see that they are not stolen. At a certain hour of the morning the factors' own men come in to their duty again, to receive, and sweep, and set out, and patrol their masters' bays; and the same routine recommences. And there is nothing more from year to year, and from week to week, and day by day.

It has been said that all this is very even, and very easy, and very simple. Yes; and it is this very evenness, and continuity, and simple ease, that mark an immense improvement. Skinners and skin dealers are old established enough. The first Worshipful Company of them was founded by Edward the Third, in 1327; the Worshipful Company of Leather-Sellers, as a next grade, was founded by Henry the Sixth, in 1442; the Worshipful Company of Curriers was founded by James the First, as one of his earliest acts or regulations, in 1605. Yet, till half a century ago, these companies—possessing masters, liverymen, pensioners, and so forth, and being all of them more or less concerned in the preliminary sale of skins—had to put up with a method of buying these skins so unseemly and unsanitary that it amounted to a disgrace. The butchers just killed their beasts, flayed them, and flung their skins into the gutter before their shop-doors. Lying there, in reeking and horrible heaps, the skin factors came amongst them, seated in their carts, stopping up traffic on kerb and road; and they examined into there,

and bargained there, and when their price had been accepted they tossed their purchases up behind them, and drove away. A small market did exist, as an actual fact, in the Borough, in Suffolk-street, to which these factors, with their hides and skins, next rattled off, and in which their customers, the tanners and the fell-mongers, met them. But the size of it, the plan of it, the method, were miserably inadequate to the vastly-growing trade of the vastly-growing metropolis, and in 1820 the Leather-Sellers' Company was roused. They cleared the ample space where they now transact their business—and where each renter pays for as many bays as his trade requires, and there is a strict rule that none except the renters may effect sales at all—and the poor premises and the poor arrangements were happily and creditably left behind for ever.

Now one glance at the Bermondsey Market gives the most vivid and pungent assurance that a skin is of no use, for any purpose, raw. In a hot climate a few hours would make it putrid; in a cold climate the same period would stiffen it and harden it, like wood or a shell. Consequently, the chief interest of a skin or hide is not when it is lying in a bay under a colonnade to be sold; it is rather when the selling is over, and a curer, currier, or tanner, has received it in his tannery, and is submitting it to that long list of operations that make it fit for sight, and touch, and smell. Varying, as these operations do, according to country, to century, to kind, and to end, they resemble one another in the main, in being, in some way, a souse or pickle; and they are, withal, well known. Still there are a few curiosities among them not lying upon the surface, that are well worthy of a brief mention. Kid-skins, for instance, after a long preliminary steeping in alum and salt and warm water, are treated, for one process, to a bath, three or four days long, of the yolk of eggs; buckskins and goat-skins at Astracan are fed with honey for a similarly long repast; sheep-skins, for metamorphosis into morocco leather, are saturated, at Fez and Tetuan, with ripe fresh figs, pomegranate bark being the substance used to dye them yellow. In Russia, hides and skins are not allowed the gratification of any such dainty appetites, but are drenched copiously, so to speak, in a rough, peasant-like manner, with sour oatmeal. It is fish-oil, made somewhat thick and creamy by

admixture with tallow, that is generally used by curriers to soften skins after tanning; it is a smearing of birch-bark that gives the peculiar smell to russia leather—the valuable quality of this birch being that it keeps out worms; it is vigorous rubbing with a glass ball, cut into a polygonal form, with a subsequent vigorous rubbing with a box-wood ball, cut with equidistant parallel grooves, that gives the compactness and choppy streakiness that distinguishes moroccos; it is a heavy steel cylinder, wound round with wires, used to produce this effect in russias; it is a solid rake, with blunt points, that gives the roughness admired in maroquins. In the matter of tanning and dyeing skins, the substances used are almost innumerable. To obtain the red colour, cochineal takes a first place, naturally; it is helped by sorrel, by salsola ericoides—an alkaline plant, plentiful in the salt deserts of Tartary—by Brazil wood; to obtain other colours there are solutions of saffron and sumach; for the tanning itself, there are solutions of apricot, myrtle, rose-chestnut, cherry, hazel, ash, tormentil, saw, poplar, plum, beech, alder, black willow, olive, cinquefoil, bistort, ladies' mantle, water-flag, mimosa, souchong tea, elm, oak, nut-galls, and many others. The bark is the portion of these plants used, where bark is; it is sometimes the inner bark, sometimes the entire bark; it is thought by some experimentalists to have peculiar virtues if stripped in the winter; by others, to be better if stripped in the spring. Sir Humphry Davy was an ardent enquirer into the properties of most of these. Starting with the proposition that to tan is to divest skins of a great deal that they have, such as hair, horns, moisture, and all removable accumulations, and to invest skins with one thing that they have not—viz. tannin, a substance that permeates the gelatinous parts, enabling them effectually to keep off wet, and as effectually to keep out decomposition—Sir Humphry was moved to ascertain what this action was, and in what trees its active power was chiefly to be found. Sir Joseph Banks helped him in his efforts, by gifts and loans out of his stores of botanical specimens acquired in his just-finished voyages; and without entering into any details whatever of Sir Humphry's experiments, to which he devoted what he called the leisure hours of two years, and which were published in extenso in the

Royal Society Transactions of 1803, it is sufficient to say that his results proved that tannin is most abundant in the catechu of Bombay, being there, out of four hundred and eighty parts, two hundred and sixty-one; and least abundant in the common willow, being there, out of four hundred and eighty parts, only eleven. As a process, skin-dressing is long—about as long as the time covered by Sir Humphry's enquiries; and as this means that a tanner has to keep his property during the term of dressing, without getting back a penny upon his outlay, the process is consequently costly. Many efforts have been made by tanners, therefore, again and again, to reduce all this. Some have been successful, in so far that, for twenty-four months, there might now be written twenty-four weeks, as a broad statement, at both ends; these are not to be expounded, since, as they are the result of private and commercial investigations, they are of course kept secret for private profit; but, as a rule, over-quick tanning is not to be commended, for the reason that complete saturation must depend upon time, as well as upon strength and efficacy, and because, unless complete saturation has taken place, there will always be patches of hardness and rottenness in a skin, that must interfere with its sightliness and durability. Besides, tanning involves a great deal—takes in a great many processes. There is liming, or salting, if it be wool—which would be spoilt by lime—to loosen the hair; there is smoking, to loosen the epidermis; there is fleshing, to scrape these away; there is raising, which is immersing, to swell out the pores; there is pitting, which is more immersing, that these pores may suck in as much of the tanning liquor as they can suck; there is handling, which is taking up from pitting, and putting back to pitting again, in fresh liquor, ooze, or luvium, for the sucking to be thorough and entire; there is drying; there is compressing; there is beating smooth; there is numbering, weighing, stamping, where required; there is dyeing, tooling—the various methods—and a final ironing to give a gloss. It is impossible for this to be effected without great consumption of time. The operations are not wanted, all of them, for all skins or hides, it is true. Out of the animals whose skins fall into the curer's hands, there are sheep, lambs, goats, kids, bucks, oxen, bulls, and all their tribe, buffaloes, porpoises, deer,

hogs, kangaroos, camels, horses, asses, to enumerate no more; and it is evident that the treatment required to reduce kid, say, is not the treatment required to reduce buffalo. As an instance, and as a curiosity, a few particulars shall be given about shagreen. Shagreen is horse, occasionally, and, occasionally, ass. It is almost peculiar to Astracan, where the Tartars and Armenians prepare it. They cut a small semicircular piece of the horse's or ass's hide from the back, just above the tail, and they cut this small semicircular piece only. They soak it and scrape it with some of the usual methods, and then they stretch it on a frame and lay it on a floor that is strewn with the smooth hard black seeds of the *ala lenta* and goose-foot (*chenopodium album*). It is these seeds that give the skin the mottled appearance for which it is admired; and they are trodden hard into it, after a felt has been laid over it, to be certain the tread shall be so well diffused that it shall not cause a split or crack. The beautiful malachitian colour of shagreen comes from a bath of sal ammoniac and a strewing of copperfilings; the blue tint is given by indigo; the black, by galls and vitriol. In either case, the final dressing is of oil or suet; and every dressing has been hard, and tight, and strained rigidly, so that it is no wonder a metallic surface is imitated, and that the familiar horse or ass gets no recognition beneath so much bewilderment.

Finally, there is little occasion to say anything of the use of skins. Man, dating from primeval times downwards, has dressed in them; has lived in them, as tents; has slept on them; has ridden on them, inflated, across brooks and rivers; has stored oil, milk, wine, and water in them; has carried apparel, merchandise, and treasure in them; has had them for hangings, harness, fastenings, ornaments; even for music, as drums and tambourines. In the *Iliad*, there is mention of goat-skins filled "with the vine's all-cheering juice;" in *Exodus*, there is mention of sheep-skins dyed red to enrich the Tabernacle; Pompeian paintings show ox-hides being filled with liquors to carry away in carts; the open wine stores at Tiflis, Georgia, show these same ox-hides ranged round the walls in queer full rows, standing in hoops to steady them, as casks would stand for storing. It was a kid-skin filled with

water that Abraham gave Hagar when he banished her with Ishmael into the wilderness. As a woman, she could not have carried a filled goat-skin, which is a heavy load for a man; as an Oriental, she would not have carried earthenware, which is weighty in itself, which would break, and would spill; she would not have carried metal, which gets heated with the scorching sun, so that the liquor in it soon becomes boiled, or baked. Skin, too, is peculiarly desirable in hot climates for the reasons that it keeps out sand—ever blowing when a breeze blows, and almost as penetrative as water—and that it keeps out the incessant annoyance and mischief of fine and predatory ants. Then skins are already shaped, for this one section of their utility; they want no thought, they want no moulding. By cutting off an animal's head, and emptying him without cutting his skin, his thighs serve as handles by which to move him or strap him up for carriage; he can be steadied by a hoop-stand if he is to be set up comically on his haunches; his neck remains a neck for pouring, and there is nothing more required. Naturally, commerce in skins, on account of their usefulness and their readiness, is immense and far-reaching. The names of Russia, Astracan, Morocco—for all, it is only sheep—carry their own localities; to them must be added Fern, St. Domingo, Barbary, Cape Verde, Senegal, Muscovy, the Canadas, Havana. The manufacturers depending on successful importations from these places are glovers, saddlers, harness-makers, coachmakers, breechesmakers, gilt-leather stampers, chairmakers, shoemakers, bookbinders—almost a column more; even hatters want skin for hat-linings, mattress-makers want skin for their puffed tabbing, and a hint may be given of the production of such goods as whips, braces, dressing-bags, boot-laces, dog-collars. Of Acts of Parliament—British—in respect of skins, there have been plenty. Hume scarcely thought the commodity worthy of senators' attention. He says, writing of 1571, that Parliament dare not touch the Queen's prerogative, but might only employ itself in making laws for the preservation of pheasants and partridges, the milling of cloth, or the due tanning of leather. But the due tanning of leather is of the most precise importance, it did not require this short exposition to show. Cromwell would have thought so, when he assembled his men, clad in "buff."

Ket, the tanner and insurrectionist, would have thought so, when he gathered together his twenty thousand followers in 1549, under the Oak of Reformation, at Norwich—the oak being the English tanner's chief resource for the substance tannin; and when the ringleaders of these were hanged afterwards, appropriately, on the very tree. "I'll smoke your skin-coat!" cries Philip Faulconbridge to Austria; and "hang a calf-skin on his recreant limbs!" he echoes after Constance. Cases, these, where skins need have had no tanning, either imperfect or "due;" where they would have been best enjoyed if worn and seen, as to be seen in Bermondsey Market. But for all other purposes, in all places, let the tanning come, strictly as by Elizabethan law enacted.

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS.

A NORSE SUPERSTITION.

"NAY, mother, nay; the pictured coal is glowing,
Dully and redly on the hearthstone there;
Yon was no flame of careless idlers' throwing,
Nor rocket flashing through the startled air;
'Twas but the gleaming of the Northern Lights—
Ah, there again, they reddened Huntcliff heights.

"So, let me raise you softly on the pillow,
See, how the crimson lustre flares and dies,
Turning to red the long heave of the billow,
And the great arch of all the starless skies;
The fishers say such beauty bodes them sorrow,
Telling of storm, and wind to blow to-morrow."

"No, child, the busy wife may bait her lines,
And net and gear lie ready for the morning,
No presage in that wavering glory shines,
No doom in the rich hues the clouds adorning;
They do but say the lingering hours are past,
The gates, the golden gates, unclose at last.

"Won, the long hill so steep and drear to climb,
Done, the long task so bitter hard in learning;
The tears are shed, and garnered up by time,
The heart beats, freed from all its lonely yearning;
The bar swings back, and flooding seas and skies,
Burst out the deathless lights of Paradise.

"See, see, by the great valves of pearl they stand,
Friends, children, husband; see glad hands out-
reaching!

For me, for me, the undiscovered land,
Its promise in that roseate signal teaching;
Aye, kiss me, child, the lips will soon be dumb,
That yet in earthly words can say, 'I come.'"

Again the banner of the Northern Lights
Waved broad and bright across the face of heaven;
And in the cottage on the rugged heights,
The passing radiance by their glory given,
Showed a pale orphan weeping by the bed,
And the calm smiling of the happy dead.

KING'S COMBE.

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

THE Combe pack had a splendid run that day. The fox was a good one, and gave them a long chase before he gave in down by Dereham Hollow; only the

squire, his three sons, and a few veteran fox-hunters were in at the death. The breakfast had made it late before they started, and they resolved to be content with the day's work.

Cuthbert left the party in order to ride home with Lord Dereham and his daughter; his father and the rest turned their horses' heads towards King's Combe. The squire was in high good-humour; he rode on in front with an old friend, reviewing the events of the day with many a hearty laugh. Not far behind rode the rest, chatting, and patting their horses. Presently, a boy, who had been stealthily following the riders on the other side of the hedge, burst through, and shambled hesitatingly up to the side of the Dandy. Jim looked down in sullen amazement.

"What the deuce do you mean by this? Get out of the way, or——"

The rustic, restored to himself by the well-known style of this address, here broke in stolidly:

"Please, sir, Master Rutherford sent me. Master Dick is a lyin' yonder in Mother Cray's cottage, and—and—please, sir, you're to tell the squire."

The last words were quite successful in rousing Jim's faculties. "Percy," he called out; "Percy, come here, you're wanted."

Percy rode back, and the boy repeated his story. "And please, sir," said he again to Jim, "you're to tell the squire!"

Jim, much excited, seized him by the collar.

"No, you go and tell the squire, you——"

But the boy twisted himself out of his strong grasp, and darted through the hedge.

"It's all a lie, a confounded lie of that young rascal's," said Jim, white and trembling.

Percy looked disturbed, but he had his wits about him as usual.

"He wouldn't dare say such a thing; nor would he have the wit to invent it! It's true enough, beyond a doubt. You will have to break it to the squire, Jim, while I get home and prepare Margaret."

"I tell the squire! I won't! I'll be hanged if I will!" said Jim, forcibly.

"Then I must, I suppose, you hulking coward," said Percy, quietly.

He left his brother, and rode quickly up to the squire, waiting until he should have finished a speech he was making to one of his friends.

"As good a run as we shall have this season! Can't understand Rutherford's not being in at the finish, nor Dick! Dick got that mare in order in style to-day, and looked as if he meant going."

Then the squire noticed Percy, riding quietly by his side. He saw by his son's face that he had something to tell.

"Eh, Percy? What's the matter?"

"Dick's done for, sir," said Percy. The Combes always spoke to the point when they had anything to say; it was part of their training. The squire drew rein.

"Where is he?"

"Cray's cottage, sir. Rutherford's with him."

"Gentlemen, you will excuse me!" said the squire, turning to his awestruck companions. And he rode away with his son, as composed and cool as ever.

I had left Rutherford alone by the bedside, and joined the woman of the house and young Hedley in the outer room, when the squire entered.

"Which way?" he asked the woman. She pointed to the half-open door, and he entered, so calmly that we thought he could not know what he should find there. But the squire was true to his own creed. We waited, awed—silent. Then we heard him speak to Rutherford, and the sullen tones of the latter's reply; he was giving his father Dick's message. There was a pause, and then the squire came gravely out. "Call the men," he said; "we must take him home."

He had seen, as he entered, the groups of amazed rustics hanging about at a respectful distance. I opened the door and beckoned to a couple of labourers who were slinking behind a couple of bare trees. They tramped silently in, followed by the village doctor, who had been absent from home when sent for. He began apologising, trusted that he—

"You're too late, Mr. Lawson," said the squire. "He's dead; and if you want to know what killed him, you must wait till we get to the house."

The doctor bowed, and stepped meekly into the background. Rutherford and his father placed poor Dick's body again on the hurdle, and covered him; then Rutherford, and young Hedley, and the two labourers carried him out—carried him home. The squire led the way, erect, grave, and calm; the doctor and I brought up the rear.

I went direct to my own room; but I

was scarcely there before I heard the heavy tramp up the stairs, the pause at my door, then the tramp up—up again; the opening of the door I knew so well; then a slower tread over my head than I was accustomed to hear—they were in Dick's room; there was a pause, and a sound as of the laying down of a burden, and then I heard the tramp—tramp down again. Dick was in his room; but the lad was quiet enough now.

The heavy stillness was unbearable; I left my room and went downstairs into the empty study.

Not a sound in all the house; but a murmur of coarse voices from the stable-yard; it suddenly ceased; someone had gone in among them.

Presently the door of the room opened, and Jim lounged in, restless and sulky. Jim did not show to advantage in affliction.

"What has everybody skulked out of the way for? Not a soul in the place, it seems! Fire half out! I'll wake somebody!"

He crossed the room towards the bell, when a shout was heard in the hall which arrested even him.

"Dick, Dick! Where are you, Dick?"

It was Cuthbert, just returned from Dereham Hall. He opened the door and burst in, bright from his ride.

"Hallo! Where's Dick? I want him to come for a gallop. I've got Bramble waiting outside. Where is he, Jim?"

Jim replied, with an oath, "Ask Rutherford."

"Rutherford! Rutherford's no friend of Dick's! He did him an ill turn this morning with his 'Parson Dick.' Where is the Rider?"

"How should I know?"

"You are precious surly, sir, this afternoon; and the colonel is as glum! Can't make you all out! I suppose I shall find someone upstairs. Perhaps Dick is in his room!"

Dick was in his room. Cuthbert dashed out of the study, and we heard him mount the stairs two at a time; heard the click of the lock as he flung open the door, and then, horror-struck, we felt the shock, and a moment after, the wild cry that we were waiting for rang through the house. At that minute the glass door which led from the stable-yard opened, and Rutherford walked in. He heard the cry and stood, as we did, listening.

Down came the footsteps, dashing down the stairs and across the hall; the half-open door was flung wide, and

Cuthbert came in. His excited face became convulsed with passion when he saw Rutherford.

"You've killed him!" he shouted; and, springing across the room, he raised the hunting-whip he still carried, and struck his brother across the face.

Rutherford never blenched. Without a word he caught the boy's arms, took from him the whip, and threw it away; then he let him go, saying gravely:

"Go; and don't strike so blindly next time."

Cuthbert looked up, astonished, and saw in his brother's stern face a grief greater than his own. Subdued and ashamed, he turned and left the room, with head bent down. I followed him out.

That evening I saw more of the iron Combe discipline. When I entered the drawing-room, shortly before the usual dinner-hour, they were all assembled—all but that one! Margaret was white as marble, but as unmoved as the rest. Never was the Combe training so manifest; when I looked from the one to the other, each was decorously grave, each resolutely cold. Percy had avoided any difficulty as to conversation by reading a leader on the Reorganisation of the Army; he had not been as successful as usual in choosing his subject, for just then the army meant to us one young soldier—lying quietly upstairs.

Percy read his leader steadily to the end; everyone listened with grave attention, but the announcement of dinner was a great relief to us all.

The training of the rest of the household was not quite so complete; for when we took our seats, between James and me there was an empty chair, an empty place. Then Cuthbert almost broke down; he was exactly opposite, between Rutherford and Percy; the blood rushed into his face; he breathed hard, and half rose; but Percy quietly detained him, while a frightened servant drew away the unneeded chair. Then James and I closed up, and the dinner began.

There had been a minute's silence, but the squire, without a visible effort, resumed the conversation, and in spite of the first shock, everyone joined in it; not once after that was there a pause. Nothing disturbed the even flow of talk until dinner was half over; then suddenly, while the squire was speaking, a loud, long laugh from Rutherford rang through the

room. Startled, we all looked towards him. His eyes were bright and restless, and his face was flushed. Suddenly conscious of the effect he had produced, he stared round the table; then his head sank, and a shiver passed through his frame. Rising abruptly, he pushed back his chair and left the room.

This scene almost unnerved Margaret. She rose, hesitated, then resolutely sat down again. Once more the iron will of the old squire prevailed, and the talk went on. But a sickened feeling crept over me; I could scarcely keep my thoughts from straying. At last dessert came, and brave Margaret was free. We soon broke up, but the squire kept his resolute composure to the last.

That night, by the squire's orders, the door of Rutherford's room was watched; they dared not remove the key nor tamper with the lock.

In the night someone crept heavily up the stairs and into the room above, where the staid, reticent housekeeper sat up. I heard a man's sobbing, and it was long before the footsteps came down again. I don't know who it was; all I am sure of is that it was not Jim.

By the squire's desire, I stayed for the funeral. The stern effort at stolidity grew easier after that gloomy first night, and Rutherford ruled back his wavering reason with an iron will, and was as calm as the rest.

The day came when Dick was to be buried. We carried him ourselves to the little church, between lines of mourners; several of his brother-officers were there, and half the foxhunters of the county. As he stood beside the open grave, Rutherford's struggle grew hard; the strong frame by my side quivered, and I put my old arm within his. He did not notice this until it was all over, when he started, turned, and hoarsely thanked me. I walked home with him silently, and we knew that we were friends.

The squire asked me to stay yet a little while among them, and for the sake of Rutherford, in whom my interest was now very strong, I did so.

A few days afterwards, the latter spoke to me after breakfast:

"I am going down to the Parsonage to-day, to give—her—his message."

It was the first reference he had made to his dead brother or his false love. I walked down towards the church to meet him on his return; when he appeared he

looked even sterner than usual, but less constrained. We turned towards King's Combe together.

"I think you know something about the way this girl befooled us," he said abruptly.

I nodded.

"She was quite up to her usual form to-day. Ignorant how much I knew, she began condoling with me, sympathising with me; and I let her. She was most touchingly sorry for me; she felt for my grief, for my loss. She did it very well; all in that gentle voice that made a fool of me once. At last I said: 'You are very kind, Miss Irwin; my brother did not forget you when he lay dying.' I think she looked a little surprised; but I swear the tears were in her eyes as she answered. 'Thought of me! Poor fellow!' 'Yes, Miss Irwin,' said I, looking at her steadily; 'Dick sent you his love.' The colour came into her face then. 'And he told me to give you back these;' and I handed her the letters, and a book of poetry, and then a little sheet of paper—with 'From my darling' scrawled outside. 'I took that from his jacket when he was dead, Miss Irwin.' She took them without a word. 'And I have brought you back this;' and I gave her another packet, with a curl she had given me inside; I had been fool enough to write something of the same sort on it once. Her colour got deeper, but I declare she did not lose her self-possession even then; she kept her eyes down. 'Thank you,' she said. I felt that I should have liked to say something bitter, but it's of no use to try to fight these women with their own weapons; and I knew she was hard hit, though she was so cool. So I bowed and came away."

He paused, and then suddenly broke out in a wild burst of passion:

"Curse her! Curse her dark eyes and her soft voice! She maddened us both; woke the devil in me, and broke Dick's heart; and now she has killed him!"

It was some time before I again heard anything of the Combes. The next news I received from Lubshire was an invitation to the wedding of Percy Combe and—Mary Irwin.

I did not go; my admiration for Clever Combe's talents was too great for me to suppose him utterly ignorant of the part she had played in the story of his brothers' lives; and I was not sure that I could

look sufficiently festive for the occasion. However, I met him, not long afterwards, looking as quietly intelligent as ever, and heard, from him, of several changes at King's Combe.

Cuthbert had grown restless and irritable, and wanted to go to London to join Rutherford, to whom he had transferred his boyish homage. So the squire sent him to Oxford, with a warning impressive enough to keep him steady. Jim the squire kept with him—to look after some of the farms, he said. Percy thought this fact significant.

"The squire is not the kind of man to show his wounds," said he. "But, you see, he has always been remarkably independent of his boys or any other society. Don't think I mean that he's breaking up. Not a trace of decay in him. By-the-bye, do you know that he hunted through the winter, and twice took the brook that did for poor Dick? But there's something wrong when the squire can find company in Jim!"

However that might be, before the next hunting season came round, the squire was dead.

I visit Rutherford at King's Combe now and then. He is not sullen now, but he is very stern. He looks much older than he is, but the opinion of the Lubshire wisacres is that he is "as hard as nails," and I believe they are right.

There is no King's Combe pack now, and the present squire has never hunted since that fatal run of Dereham Hollow; but he keeps a capital stud, and rides and drives as well as ever. People said at one time that he was going to marry Lady Ethel Dereham, he was at Dereham Park so often. But I believe that he never thought of such a thing, and only haunted the place because she had cared for his brother. Rutherford Combe was no longer a marrying man.

So Jim has a very good prospect of sulking in savage state at King's Combe in the time to come, if, indeed, his brother, who threatens to wear well, does not outlive him.

Cuthbert is in the army. He is a nice young fellow, but rather extravagant; his brother should cut down his allowance by one half; but Cuthbert was Dick's chum, and Rutherford will never tighten the reins over him, I am afraid.

Percy has made his way, as everybody knew that he would. He is Sir Percy

Combe, Baronet, already, but of course he will not stop there. He and his fascinating wife do not visit much at King's Combe. Lady Combe says gravely: "Rutherford Combe talks so unfeelingly of his poor brother's death!"

A CARLIST CHIEF.

IN THREE PARTS. PART III.

THE interest of the campaign now took me into the province of Vizcaya, and it was not until the battle of Abarzuza was fought, in the following summer—made famous by the death of Marshal Concha—that I found myself back in Navarre. I remember one September evening, after dining with some officers of a Castilian battalion, that we were reclining lazily smoking, by the river Arga, listening digestively and dreamily to the murmur of the water, as it sped among the rocks and fell in silvery cascades into pools, where it became silent for a moment, to again bubble garrulously as it found an opening for escape. Lulled by the sound of the stream, I had forgotten the presence of my companions, and I fancy that if my idle mind worked at all, the brain paths of memory led me to some loved association in England. Be this as it may, I was abruptly startled from my reverie by the exclamation:

"See, senores, see that man! It is a stain on the Carlist cause that such as he should hold a position in our army."

It was the major who thus bitterly spoke, and, glancing in the direction indicated, I saw Rosas striding rapidly through the neighbouring avenue, with head bent down and neither looking to right nor left. For many months I had not heard his name mentioned, and had so far forgotten his existence that it never occurred to me, on my return to Estella, to make enquiries as to his doings.

"Why, comandante," I observed, "you seem to have a bad opinion of the cabecilla. What especial work has he been engaged in during our absence at Somorostro?"

"Is it possible, caballero, that you are ignorant of all that is said of him? It is true that, until the other day, I gave little heed to the reports which reached me, but a ride to the Sima of Igazquiza, better known as the Sima of Rosas, told me more than the most eloquent tongue could tell."

"But what do you mean by the Sima?" I asked.

"The Sima, senor, is a well-like opening in the rocky bottom of a deep hollow, near to the eastern base of Montjardine, in the neighbourhood of the village of Igazquiza. A subterranean torrent rushes through at a depth of from two hundred and fifty to three hundred feet—at least so I calculated by the time it took for a stone to reach the water. Into this awful abyss it is said that Rosas casts the wretched victims, whose evil fortune it is to incur suspicion of treachery to a cause, which he serves with a terrible and brutal fanaticism. No one interferes with his license to murder—in many instances, no doubt innocent beings—for of trial there is none. Let anybody who is sceptical go to Igazquiza and hear from the peasants, who have courage to speak, the fearful story that trembles from their blanched lips."

"But, surely," I observed, "Don Carlos can have no knowledge of this; he never would permit such acts to be perpetrated, by even a chief of irregulars, who after all bears his commission?"

"No, I cannot presume for a moment," replied the comandante, "that the king is aware of these misdeeds. No doubt, the revelation of such horrors is carefully avoided by those who surround him. Now I am a good member of the Church of Rome"—here the comandante crossed himself—"but I have reason to believe that some of its priests encourage and protect the cabecilla. They fear the influence of liberal ideas, and they avail themselves of this fanatic as a weapon to smite those who are suspected of aiding the enemies of religion. Of course, in these days, no excuse can be found for such uncompromising, bigoted ministers of the faith. Then again, it has been whispered that some officers, high in command, anxious to avoid the annoyance and perhaps publicity of numberless courts-martial, prefer leaving the cabecilla Rosas supreme authority in dealing with the unfortunate people whom it may please him to arrest. Heaven only knows how he may use such power. For instance, it would be very easy for a man having a foe, to denounce him as a spy or agent of the Liberals to Rosas, and additional force might be given to the denunciation, by adding a sum of money. I do not assert that such is ever the case, but looking at the circumstances, I think it possible that something of the kind may frequently occur."

I confess I was completely taken aback at hearing the comandante thus unreservedly express himself, especially with regard to priests and superior officers. His views were very different to those of the comandante, who some months before, at the dinner-table of the Fonda de Europa, had spoken in defence of the cabecilla. His companions quite endorsed the observations that had fallen from his lips, and they all agreed, that such individuals as Rosas disgraced a cause dear to them, and which could only be fought for, with honour, openly on the field.

That night, thinking over what I had heard, I resolved to pay a visit to the Sima of Igazquiza, and so judge for myself as to the truth of the fearful accusations. I had no desire that my proposed expedition should come to the knowledge of Rosas or any of his abettors, as it occurred to me that, should my prying intention be known, I might find someone in the immediate neighbourhood with offers to act as guide, not only to the exterior, but to the interior of the abyss. Under these circumstances, I thought it prudent to keep my own counsel; so, without having spoken to anyone, I started the following afternoon on foot. I presumed, from my acquaintance with the position of Igazquiza, the distance to be about six miles, and so it proved.

My route lay past the famous monastery of Irache, the foundation of which imposing pile dates back to the tenth century. It now served as chief hospital to the Carlist army, and was filled with the wounded from the field of Abarzuza. Following the Logrono-road for some five miles, I turned off to the right over a lone-some hill, and through a stretch of scrub and dwarf forest. On my left rose high and cone-like the summit of Montjardine, capped by the ancient castle of San Esteban, taken from the Moors in the year 907 by the valiant Sancho Garcia, tenth King of Navarre. Not a soul did I meet on the silent, deserted path, which, from the sun-glare of a scorched, scrub-covered rise, would dip now and again into the gloomy shade of a rankly-foliated hollow. At length I broke from the wooded stretch, and came suddenly upon the apparently dead village of Igazquiza; not even a dog barked at my approach. Turning into the narrow street, which was just wide enough for the passage of a mule with paniers, or a bullock-waggon, I sought for some sign of life. The massive stone-arched doorways

were closed, and looking up at the glassless apertures, scarcely to be dignified by the name of windows, I but caught a glimpse, here and there, of a dark kerchief-covered head, hastily withdrawn from my enquiring gaze. To one or two of these fleeting apparitions I called, and the only answer was the noiseless closing of the shutter; it was very evident that no one in the village cared to be seen speaking to a stranger. At last, at the corner of a filthy alley, I captured an ancient witch-like dame just as she emerged into the broader way, and though she tried to shuffle back, I resolutely blocked her chance of retreat.

"Senora," said I, bowing, "will you be good enough to indicate the tavern?"

Mumbled she, through her toothless gums:

"Taberna? No ha; yo no entiendo nada; soy muy vieja"—"Tavern? There is none; I don't understand anything; I am very old."

Taking some coppers from my pocket, and placing them in the palm of my hand, I suggested that perhaps she was not too old to understand their value. At the sight of the money the crone's manner completely changed. Her glazed eyes literally sparkled, and, bending forward eagerly, she exclaimed in tones shaky from excitement:

"Si, senor; there only wants another cinquena to make a real."

The cinquena was added, and I proposed that this vast sum should be hers, providing she could collect her scattered ideas and point out any house that served, more or less, the purpose of a tavern. With such wealth in view, the ancient dame shuffled off her fourscore years, and, motioning me to follow, rapidly led the way to a tumble-down, rickety-looking building, one of the rotting folding-doors of which stood open. Extending her shrivelled, bony hand for the money, my guide intimated that that was the place enquired for, and no sooner was she paid than she disappeared as if by magic. Crossing the threshold of this uninviting hostelry, I found myself in a stable; and, while groping through the obscurity for a staircase of some sort, I stumbled over a litter of pigs, to fall against a mule, which began to plunge and kick viciously. Having struck a match, I discovered a ladder-like ascent, up which I cautiously made my way, for nearly every other step was missing. This led to a platform or

landing, and, passing through an open door, I found myself in a long, low, ill-lit room, the bare, blackened rafters of which were worm-eaten and interweaved by spider-webs; the once-whitened walls were stained with grease and wine; and the floor was so caked with every species of offal, that not a trace of the boards remained. A scarred oak-table, with settles on either side, made up the furniture. Though my advent must have been heard, no one put in an appearance; and it was not until I had clapped my hands loudly and shouted, "Patrona," twice, that a barefooted girl noiselessly entered. She seemed dazed and scared at first; but having, with a sidelong glance, timidly examined me, a smile passed over the by-no-means ill-looking face, and she asked how she could serve me.

"Have you fresh cool water from the spring?"

"Si, senor."

"Then bring me some, with sugar and a dash of aquadiente."

This was brought, and while searching for the money to pay, I looked up, and said, suddenly:

"The Sima of Rosas cannot be far from here?"

As I spoke, steps were heard on the landing, the scared expression again took possession of the girl's face, and putting her fingers to her lips, she motioned silence, then said loudly:

"I have no change, senor; can you not find sufficient coppers?"

At this moment entered the room a thick-set, beetle-browed man of about thirty. He wore a yellow-and-red striped handkerchief, bound turbanwise about the temples, leaving the top of the head bare. A coarse white shirt, the sleeves of which were rolled up, exhibiting the bronzed, sinewy, muscular arms, lay wide open, displaying the tawny throat and hair-covered chest; a crimson scarf was girt about the loins, and blue velvet trousers and open sandals completed a not unpicturesque costume. He glanced at the girl quickly and then at me, and finally saluted us with—

"Buenos tardes"—"Good afternoon."

I acknowledged the greeting, observed that it was very hot, but capital weather for the maize and grapes; said incidentally that I was going to spend the evening with one of the curas of Irache, and asked, pointing to the still untasted glass, if he would permit me to offer him the

like. He shook his head, thanked me, but accepted a proffered cigar; then with an "A Dios" he left the room, and I heard one of the doors on the landing close after him. The girl now said rapidly and in low tones:

"The Sima is close by. I can tell you nothing—ask at the casa over the bridge and go quickly;" then in raised voice, "Si, senor, that is just the money. Gracias, a Dios!"

I had motioned her to keep the small amount of change, and having hastily swallowed the contents of my glass, soon found myself again in the deserted street. There was no difficulty in finding the stream, the rushing sound of water was a sufficient guide. Neither could I be mistaken in the casa, a solitary white building, placed in a hollow some hundred yards from the bridge and beyond the precincts of the village. The door was open, and just within it, seated on low stools, were two women and a girl busily at work, sewing and patching various much-used articles of clothing.

"Buenos tardes tengan vas," said I, lifting my boina, and wiping my forehead; "it is hot walking in the sun."

"Good afternoon," repeated the women; and one of them, rising, asked if I would rest myself.

This was exactly what I wanted. I entered, and a chair was placed in a shady portion of the apartment. We fell into conversation, and having mentioned incidentally that I was English, a certain restraint, which I could not fail to remark, disappeared. I then observed that I had heard a great deal concerning the famous Sima de Rosas; and that, if I was rightly informed, it must be close by. At the mention of the Sima, all three crossed themselves in a furtive fashion, and she who had been the spokeswoman bent low over her work, and simply said:

"Sima? I don't know what you mean."

"Well, now, that's odd," replied I; "I was told, not ten minutes ago, that you could give me any information I wanted."

"Santa Maria!" exclaimed the woman, looking up in terrified astonishment, an expression which also passed over the faces of her companions. "Santa Maria! who told you this?"

"The girl at the tavern in Igazquiza."

"Did anyone hear her?"

"No."

"Was there no other person at the house?"

"Yes;" and I described the man who had disturbed our conversation. The women again crossed themselves, and the one who had already spoken asked anxiously:

"Does he know you have come here?"

"He knows nothing; he remained in the room but a few moments, I gave him a cigar, and he left; and so did I almost immediately; but tell me, who is this individual whom you seem to hold in dread?"

"Es mal hombre!" she replied, again crossing herself; and, though I repeated the question, I could get no other answer but that he was a bad man; that, indeed, she knew nothing; that—that she did not care to speak of him. I then asked whom the girl might be, whether she was the servant or patrona of the tavern?

"She is my cousin, poor thing!" and the woman bent over her work as if desirous of ending the conversation.

"See here," said I, after a short pause, "I have told you that I am English, and I now promise that if you will give me any information you can about Rosas and his doings at the Sima, and also point out the spot, I will not mention to anyone in Estella, or, for that matter, in Navarre, that my knowledge comes from you. Now, here are five pesetas, equal to five days' work. Do you wish to earn them in half an hour?"

The woman and her companions looked up with a covetous gaze, then conferred together in low tones. Finally, said she:

"You promise this?"

"Most solemnly."

She then rose, stepped out into the road, glanced to the right and left; and, from my losing sight of her for a moment, I fancy she even examined the approaches to the back of the house. On entering, she again asked me if I was certain that no one but her cousin knew that I had come to them? Having set her mind at rest on this point, she told the girl to take her stool and work to the door-step, and watch for the coming of anyone.

"Now, senor," said she, resuming her seat, "what is it you wish to know? I will tell you all I can; but ask me nothing about the man you saw at the tavern."

"Is it true that Rosas casts into the Sima of Igazquiza those whom he arrests, on suspicion of their being spies or liberals?"

"Yes, senor, it is true."

"But how is this done—is there no preceding trial?"

"No, senor, there is no trial; they are led to the top of the hill, shot, and then slid over the precipice to fall into the Sima."

"Have many met this fate?"

"The people about here say that over six hundred have died in this way—but, Santa Maria!"—crossing herself—"we do not care to speak together, the cabecilla has confidantes everywhere."

"Now are you quite sure that all this is true—have you seen what you state?"

"Listen, senor. You were this afternoon in the tavern at Igazquiza, where you saw my cousin. Well, sometimes, in the dusk of the evening, Rosas, with a number of his partida, will escort into the village the poor creatures he has taken as spies, and very often there are men, women, and even children, heaped together. The cabecilla tells them they are going to Estella, where he has no doubt they will give a good account of themselves; in the meantime, he says, they may rest a little at the tavern, and he will pay for wine. We can hear the pobres—poor-ones—laughing and shouting as they are encouraged to drink, and then comes in the gathering darkness the tramping over the bridge. Our door remains closed; and we are careful to have no light, but from behind the partially-closed shutter we see them pass, many singing carelessly. Ah, they little think their journey is so soon to end. In less than a quarter of an hour we hear wild cries, followed by the report of rifles, and even then there are shrieks from those who are not dead, for some are hurled, still living, into the Sima."

Horrified at the story, I remained for a few moments silent, then said, rising:

"Will you take me to this Sima?"

"The girl shall show you," replied the woman, "but wait while I see if there is anyone stirring in the neighbourhood."

Having satisfied herself that the way was clear, she beckoned me to the door.

"You see that path on the left which dips into the hollow, then skirts up the slope?" I nodded. "Well, follow it till you reach the bushes on the ridge. I have already sent the chica by another track to meet you there."

The dollar-piece was given, and as I presented it my hand was kissed, then with a "May God go with you" the woman entered the house and closed the door.

It took me a good quarter of an hour to reach the point indicated, but sharply as I had walked, breasting the ascent without pausing, the girl was already there. We passed by a narrow pathway between the scrub growth to a clearing on the right, which might once have been a cultivated field.

"This is where they are shot," said the chica, shortly.

Evidence of this was not wanting. Exploded cartridge-cases lay about, and here and there the stubble was scorched and burnt, as though the rifle had been discharged close to the head of some poor wretch, who had, perhaps, thrown himself to the ground in despair. There were various coloured rags also strewn over the field, and I noticed, among other things, the side-spring boot of a woman, and odd rotting alpagatas—close sandals—one or two of which would have fitted to a child's foot.

"But I do not see the Sima," said I, glancing in every direction.

The girl led me back to the path, the left of which was fringed by a thick growth of scrub and dwarf trees. Pointing to a narrow aperture, where the side of the track was scooped out like a shoot, she told me to lean forward and look through. I now saw that I was on the verge of an immense hollow, bowl-shaped, and some eighty or a hundred feet in depth. The side where we stood was precipitous, and though I crawled as far over as I dared, I could not distinguish the bottom. The girl, pointing to the shoot, said:

"They are dragged here, and then slid or tossed through the opening. We will now go round to a path by which we can reach the Sima."

A tortuous and steep track on that side of the pit which fronted the precipice took us down into the bramble-covered hollow, through which my guide led the way towards the foot of the cliff, on the summit of which was the shoot already mentioned. Climbing over some brier-grown rocks, the girl crept on her hands and knees to the roots of a solitary tree, telling me to be careful and to raise myself by clutching the trunk.

Ugh! A shudder passed over me as I bent cautiously forward. There indeed was the black jagged opening of the Sima de Rosas, stretching to the precipice, over which the victims were

hurled. The aperture might be from twenty to thirty feet in diameter, and as I peered breathlessly into the dark depths, cold blasts of air rushed up, and there were sounds as of wailing. As my eyes became more accustomed to the gloom, I noticed that narrow ledges of rock projected here and there; and, yes, there could be no mistaking, on one lay a boina in the midst of some spattered blotches. The girl told me to look up at the face of the precipice, and I saw the shoots made through the scrub by the bodies as they slid downwards to the awful abyss, and fluttering amidst the briers were rags torn from dresses, shirts, or trousers, in the rapid rush. But it was the black, inky depths of that terrible well that my eyes sought to pierce. The traces of what had been done above could be seen; the fearful mysteries that lay below were shrouded in impenetrable darkness. The girl had collected some stones, that I might, by throwing them in, judge of the distance to the water—since ascertained to be three hundred feet. I hesitated for some moments whether I should do this, revolting at the notion of possibly striking the decaying remains of those who had thus been hurried into eternity. But then I reflected that the torrent passing in its cavernous course would probably have swept the victims far into the bowels of the earth, and I cast a stone. It struck three times in its descent on projecting masses of rock, then there was a silent pause, and finally came upwards the "cluck" as the water was reached, and following it again the wailing sounds I had already noticed. These were to be accounted for by rushing currents of air. As I turned to take another stone I saw the girl gazing, in startled attitude, at the slope on the opposite side of the hollow.

"See—see, senor, there are men coming! It is the partida." And without another word she fled through the briers and up the steep path, with the speed of a frightened fawn. I looked in the direction indicated, and sure enough I saw three figures moving downwards through the undergrowth, and from the gleam behind each I judged they had rifles slung at their backs. The first idea that occurred to me was that the evil genius of the tavern at Igazquiza had dogged my movements, and that to prevent any indiscreet babbling of matters in which I had no concern, he and his companions had doomed me to the

same fate as those who had already passed through their hands. What should I do? I certainly did not like the idea of flying ignominiously; and then, again, if I attempted to escape they would undoubtedly bring me down with their breechloaders. My weapon was a "bulldog" revolver, which I carried in a side pocket; it threw a heavy ball, and at close quarters was pretty safe in its execution. With my hand on this, keeping it concealed, I sat down and waited. As they drew near I perceived, to my unspeakable satisfaction, that they wore the uniform of a battalion of Cantabria quartered in a village near Irache. They saluted me, and asked if the Sima was not somewhere near this spot. I simply answered by pointing to the tree against which I had supported myself, and as the first man stepped forward carelessly, he sprang back with an exclamation of astonishment and horror, and then, advising his comrades, they all three crept cautiously to the brink; and there I left them.

The gray veil of evening had already commenced to spread its gloom over the hollow, and it was not until I had climbed upwards into the glow of light that I, to a certain extent, threw off the terrible feeling which weighed heavily upon me. What a contrast was there, as I stood on the summit of the hill, to the dark mysteries I had left below! In the west—beyond the mountains of Santa Cruz de Campezo, which stood out sharp and dark—the sun had sunk in a crimson, golden surf of glory; while in the south and east, against a background of orange-and-olive tinted sky, rose the pinnacles of Montjardine and Montejurra, flushed with a flood of carmine and toned by purple shadows. Leaving the village of Igazquiza to my right, I followed a path which a shepherd told me saved some distance, and made for the monastery of Irache, proposing to visit one of its abads. The priest in question was in frequent communication with France, from whence came medical stores and money contributions for the hospital service. Through his agency, owing to the uncertainty of the Carlist post, I had more than once sent letters to England, and I again desired to avail myself of this facility. Passing beneath the gateway, and skirting by a restive horse, which an armed man vainly endeavoured to soothe, I asked the porter if Don A—— was in his rooms.

"No, he is in the chapel."

"Ah well, I will seek him there."

"You cannot see him, senor; he is hearing the monthly confession of the cabecilla Rosas."

NOTE.—At the termination of the struggle, Rosas Samaniego fled to France, where he is now interned, and, notwithstanding the pressing demands made from Madrid for his extradition, the French Government decline to give him up. He has his commission as an officer in the service of Don Carlos, and he asserts that whatever he did was by superior instruction. If such really be the case, I do not envy the conscience of those who so instructed him.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCHILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XI. SUNDAY MORNING.

SUNDAY morning duly came—the last Sunday for Celia in Deepweald—and, as duly, Mademoiselle Clari astonished the whole household of Hinchford by coming down to breakfast at seven o'clock in the morning. It was true she had made arrangements to do so overnight; but that only made her appearance the more surprising. If she had said, "I shall not breakfast till twelve," and had then come down at six, there would have been nothing wonderful. The surprise lay, not in her early rising, but in her early rising when she had planned to rise early.

Nevertheless, breakfast had been got ready for her for form's and hospitality's sake, for her whims were laws. Lady Quorne had overnight promised to accompany her guest to Deepweald, but had counted so little upon being called upon by the unheard-of endurance of a caprice to fulfil her promise, that her failure to put in so early an appearance scarcely amounted, in the spirit, to a breach of her word. Walter Gordon was ready, however. He rose early by habit, kept his word even when it cost a little trouble, was unconscious of a private wish to go to Deepweald, and was conscious of a suspicion that Clari's plan of going fifteen miles to church was, for once, a whim with a purpose.

So they breakfasted together, and alone. But very seldom had the prima donna been seen at so early an hour—at so late an hour, in another matter, for seven in the morning may be regarded from two points of view, from that of the dissipated nightingale as well as from that of the laborious and business-like sparrow. And, strange to

say, and contrary to all theory and precedent, the night-bird had never looked to such advantage, as after her very short night's rest, and in a toilette that must have been made in double-quick time. The theory is that a *prima donna* is never fit to be seen in the morning, and especially by one pair of eyes. Clari, as usual, sent precedent, theory, and experience flying.

Somehow or other her dramatic tact had enabled her to catch and to assimilate the tone and atmosphere of an English Sunday morning; at any rate to the extent attainable by a fine Parisian lady, who knows how to put on Sunday as if it were a costume. She did not always dress with the best taste in the world, having an almost oriental tendency towards bright colours out of season, when fancy did not confine itself to black velvet and diamonds. But to-day she was faultless. Her costume of black cashmere must have come into existence for the occasion; her gray felt hat with a drooping feather—or rather bonnet, as hat is called on Sunday—was so constructed as to give her a look of demureness almost nun-like in its sweet serenity. She wore no ornament of any sort but a jet necklace, and looked altogether as if church-going were part of her *métier*. There was no suspicion of making-up, either in complexion or eyes; and yet none seemed to be needed. She was pale to-day, but to-day paleness became her.

She was even provided with a prayer-book; and the effect was just as good as if it had been the English church-service instead of a missal. The curiosity was, thought Walter, how she could have found a missal among her properties—to have found an English prayer-book would have been too impossible.

Fortunately it was a fine morning. Indeed, the weather had been nothing but fine since that now far-off historical down-pour at The Five Adzes. Walter and Clari left the lodge-gate in an open carriage, before there were many signs of life about the place except among the birds.

"I hope it is a long drive," said Clari. "The air is like drinking champagne. I shall get up at this hour every day till I work again."

"You have been taking a long holiday, for you."

"Has it seemed so long? Not long enough to paint my picture."

"True; but then you must remember the number of beginnings."

"Well, you must soon end now, if it is

to be done. How would it be to take me as I am now? It might be more easy."

He took a long and critical look at her. "It would be a great deal more easy, certainly. The only fault is that the portrait would not be you."

"But why not?" she asked, with a pleased smile, that told that she knew very well why. "Do I look so wicked other days?"

"I mean you look so very good to-day. But do you mean you are so soon leaving Hinchford?"

"I suppose we shall all wait for the cucumber to grow. But I heard from Prosper yesterday. He thinks of going to America. I have not been there, I think; but it is hard to remember where-ever I have been."

"What! you don't remember if you have crossed the Atlantic?"

"It is possible. But Prosper keeps an account of where we go. I do not see much difference in places—the railway-station, the theatre, the hotel; that is all. I think I would live always at Paris, or else here, at Hinchford."

"I suppose you do find some difference between Paris and Hinchford?"

"Well, there is no railway at Hinchford, nor theatre, nor hotel. It is like going to sleep, and I like sleeping. I should like to sleep all my days. But I should dream of Paris; and perhaps I should walk there in my sleep, like *La Sonnambula*, you know. Yes; to sleep at Hinchford and to dream about Paris; I think that would be the most beautiful life in the world. Ah, it is so much best to dream about what one likes than to have it—is it not so?"

"Well—no. I can't agree with you." He was wondering just then what was to be the future of a woman like Clari, with no sort of life to fall back upon when her career was ended, as the most brilliant career must be in time. She seemed to have no domestic ties or even interests; to have stored up no resources for the disposal of age. What became of such women? That she cared absolutely nothing for her art, at any rate for its own sake, was clear, even if she had not proclaimed it openly. He believed her to be selfish and cold-natured, hungry for admiration, but callous to love; and when, as she must in time, outgrow the power of extorting admiration, life would have to end before death came. Perhaps she would take to religion for a distraction.

And in that case the life of her spiritual director would not have life made easy for him by a woman who, for a whim, had compelled her impresario, the director of her worldly life, to get wet to the skin because she was in an ill humour. Unquestionably, to judge from such speculations, the original fascination of Clari over Walter Gordon was passing away. And yet all the while he knew that if this capricious, uncultured, purposeless woman took it into her head to order him, or any other creature, to leap into a volcano, the leap must as a matter of course be made, not out of love for her or even liking, but simply because she bade. And he felt also that she was as capable of bidding a man, for a whim, to plunge headlong into the heart of Vesuvius as of sending a Frenchman, in any open gig, out into a storm. She would surely be capable of the lesser cruelty, who had actually been guilty of the greater. Walter felt a sense of relief when he heard that Clari was to be safe across the Atlantic for a time, with her whims that were passions and her passions that were whims. He was never likely to come in her way, but that was all the more reason for her treating him some day as if he were. Of course one never thinks these things, but one knows them; and one soon learns how to scent danger from afar.

"Yes," said Clari, as they entered the town, "I thought so. I have been at Deepweald before. I remember that sign over the inn, there—that bell. I remember it because they gave me asparagus with butter, when I asked for it with oil. Would you believe? They never had heard of asparagus with oil. And it was very hot, I remember, and I could get no ices. You see I know all about Deepweald."

"Then you have seen the cathedral before?"

"No; I think not. I don't remember singing; but I must have, or I should not remember the asparagus. It made me cross, I remember."

"You are not cross to-day?"

"No," said Clari, sweetly and carelessly. "It is little things make me cross. But the great things——" she stopped suddenly.

"Well, what do the great things make you?"

"The great things? Oh, I like them. I think I should like to feel I had killed a man—just one man. But bad coffee—

that makes me cross; and your butter-sauce, your for ever butter-sauce, that sends me wild, and mad, and vexes me. Is this the cathedral? No."

"No; that is St. Anselm's—Gaveston's church, you know. This part of the town is called Winbury."

"Ah! the young priest with the long whiskers and the little girl. He is not very wise, I think; but he looks a good young man."

"Here is the cathedral."

The cathedral congregation was not usually large, for Deepweald contained, for its size, an extraordinary number of parish churches; and, in spite of these, an exaggerated proportion of dissenting chapels. But to-day quite a long train of worshippers was trailing through the south porch, and a large knot of loungers made a lane for them, after the manner of Assize Sunday. But, then, gossip was the only swift thing in Deepweald, and no Countess of Quorne had come to church in semi-state within the memory of fathers and mothers. Besides, this special countess had never yet set foot in the city.

"Corpo di Bacco!" exclaimed the great lady, as Walter helped her from her carriage. "Have you ever seen such clothes?"

And, in truth, the ladies of Deepweald must have been wofully disappointed to see the black costume and the gray hat of her whom they had come to take for their model henceforth and for ever. Her face expressed a smile of horror, if horror can smile. There was Mrs. Swann in a brilliant Indian shawl. There was Bessy Gaveston, for once a truant from St. Anselm's, in a dress trimmed with fur, though the sun was burning. There was Miss Hayward, in all the colours of the rainbow—and more. No doubt they had expected Lady Quorne to appear in the traditional family diamonds—a bird of paradise among the poultry yard; and behold, every common barn-door fowl was a peacock compared with the pale lady with the black dress, gray hat, and with no colour about her but her golden hair. However, the disappointment was borne very well, and Deepweald made a mental vow to go into mourning. Clari was solemnly guided by the verger into the best possible stall for being seen, and Walter was placed beside her. Fortunate indeed were they who had good places for seeing. Walter did not know that anything was supposed to be going on out of the common, or he

would have wondered what the great east window thought of it all.

The voluntary began; and Walter, who had his unknown reasons for observing Clari, noticed that, pale as she was, she looked yet paler. It might, no doubt, have been the heat of the crowded church; but a woman who was used to stage life would not be affected so easily, especially when her lungs had been gathering oxygen all the way from Hinchford to Deepweald. Then he saw a puzzled frown gather over her eyebrows, then a marked, emphatic shrug of the shoulders. And then, for the rest of the service, she absorbed herself in an examination of the east window, through which the sun threw many-coloured shadows on the floor. She did not even seem to take notice of the dean, or of the mayor in his scarlet gown, or even of the bluecoat boys. Her whole interest in the proceedings of morning service in Deepweald Cathedral seemed to have been blown away by the first notes of the organ.

But to watch a woman who is watching a window, grows monotonous after a time. Walter—who after all had not come to pray—looked round upon the congregation, who had come to pray. One and all were staring hard at the strangers in the two best stalls for being seen in. But he did not see Celia, and he missed her. It was as if the many-coloured sun, and the organ, and the chancel, and the feel of Sunday in the air would have made one perfect chord, had not one note been wanting. And, for once, he was musician enough to know the note's name. I am not defending Walter Gordon, for looking for a girl's brown eyes in church time, any more than I defend the citizens of Deepweald for staring at a woman's gray hat. It is not my mission to apologise for human nature; things are as they are.

In the middle of the sermon Clari yawned, visibly to scores of pairs of eyes. And then she, too, succumbed to human nature. The church was undeniably hot, and she had risen six hours before her time, and the sermon was dull. "Lady Quorne ought to go to St. Anselm's—her own cousin's," thought Bessy Swann, who knew the countess better than most of the congregation, from her husband's description. "She would not sleep there; and, yes, she does dye her hair. And she does not look good; but I'm glad she wears black—I can do that myself, and

I will. Simplicity is the best taste, after all."

And so thought at least a dozen others, in unison. Clearly Canon Green's sermon on "Consider the lilies of the field" was, though dull, not being thrown away.

Clari did not wake till the organ began to play the people out. She sat in her place till the chancel was empty, and then took Walter's arm.

"Your Celia told me she was taught to sing by her father, and he is organist here. That is not true—she told me a lie. Yes, *Corpo di Bacco*—a lie."

"Hush!" said Walter, feeling that the chancel of the cathedral was not precisely the place for this special phase of Clari's ways of speaking her mind. "I mean it is so—except what she learned at Linden-heim."

"But—I am in a bewilderment—*Diaminé!* She is taught by a dead man. Ah, as if I do not know his style! But the dead come to life again, sometimes. You have heard of a vampire? A vampire is a corpse that goes about among the living, and drains their blood. There are such people; there was an old man in Rome who had seen one. Ah, and I too have known a vampire; a man who had no life of his own, and had to find women, and to eat their hearts and drink their souls. Yes—the blood of their lives! But, *che Diavolo!*—I came to hear a vampire, and I have heard—an organist. I will go out and take an ice, if you please."

"What on earth is she at now?" thought Walter. "I'm afraid," he said, "you will have to be doubly disappointed; you have not heard a vampire, and ices are not sold at Deepweald on Sunday."

"No? Then what for am I here? But it is destiny. Yes; your Celia may be the daughter of a live organist, but she is taught by a dead man. It is horrible—and there are no ices; will you see for the carriage? We will go."

"But you must get some lunch, somewhere, before another fifteen miles' drive. Lady Quorne wrote that we would call at the Deanery—so they will be expecting somebody from Hinchford, I suppose. And then we can drive back towards evening."

"No. I am not hungry. The only thing I would like is an ice, and if I cannot have that, I will have nothing. Will you see for the carriage? I will wait here."

Walter, also, had to lunch on disappointment, for he had missed Celia, and he would, at any rate, have liked to invade

the hospitality of the Deanery after an early breakfast, a long drive, and a long service in the cathedral. But the saying, Man Must what Woman Will, was made for Clari.

Yes—there could be no doubt about it. Clari, in the unseen teacher of Celia, had recognised, more clearly than with eyes, the husband of Noëmi. It was a matter upon which she could not be deceived. She knew every style and fashion of song, and that of Andrew Gordon stood first and alone. Every note that Celia had sung at Hinchford had been drilled into her own ears, and into hers only, and by only one man. The girl might be the daughter of John March, organist of Deepweald, and Andrew Gordon might have been dead and buried years before she was born; but not even impossibilities can alter facts, and the existence of at least one vampire had been notorious in the Ghetto. Why might not Andrew Gordon have been a vampire indeed, according to the speculations that she had thrown out aloud to Walter? Her first impression of his magic power had never left her; and if he were a brain-vampire, feeding on women's lives, all would be clear. She shuddered as she thought what her bambina's fate might have been, with a monster for a father.

Poor little thing! She knew it was dead, and that was all. The only message, since his desertion of her, that she had ever received from her husband was: "You need not trouble to look for the child. You will never find her on this side of the grave." And that could only mean that she must wait to meet the bambina on the other side; for, if it lived, how could she fail to find her child somewhere in the world? And that solitary message was more than twenty years old now. But if Walter was deceived, and if Andrew Gordon was not dead, but still lived, and if he was here in Deepweald with another young girl in his clutches, no wonder that she had attacked her cold fowl with such energetic appetite—it was hunger for revenge. But that is a bald way of saying it. Clari had more than one woman

in her. She was more, even, than a mother who had been cruelly plundered of her only child, and had been unable to forget in twenty years of diamonds and flowers. That was enough; but she was also the jealous, waning queen, who had seen her rival—a rival sealed and sanctioned by the man, dead or alive, to whom she owed her crown. And that was more than enough; but, as if any element of possible hate were lacking, this same consecrated rival in the queendom of song had destroyed at its very outset the first blossoming of possible love and peace, all the sweeter for being late, that she had ever known.

A florid, well-fed man in black, just on the point of ceasing to be young, bowed to her in passing her on his way from the organ-stairs down the nave.

"Who is that?" she asked the verger.

"The organist, your ladyship."

But ocular demonstration had not been needed to prove to Andrew Gordon's slave and victim, wife and widow, that the organist of Deepweald was not a vampire.

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1877.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XVI. ALL IS FISH THAT COMES
TO HIS NET.

THE dean's week up in London, during the absence of Lord George, was gay enough; but through it all and over it all there was that cloud of seriousness, which had been produced by the last news from Italy. He rode with his daughter, dined out in great state at Mrs. Montacute Jones's, talked to Mr. Houghton about Newmarket and the next Derby, had a little flirtation of his own with Hetta Houghton—into which he contrived to introduce a few serious words about the marquis—and was merry enough; but, to his daughter's surprise, he never for a moment ceased to be impressed with the importance of the Italian woman and her baby. "What does it signify, papa?" she said.

"Not signify!"

"Of course it was to be expected that the marquis should marry. Why should he not marry as well as his younger brother?"

"In the first place he is very much older."

"As to that, men marry at any age. Look at Mr. Houghton." The dean only smiled. "Do you know, papa, I don't think one ought to trouble about such things."

"That's nonsense, my dear. Men, and women too, ought to look after their own interests. It is the only way in which progress can be made in the world. Of course you are not to covet what belongs

to others. You will make yourself very unhappy if you do. If Lord Brotherton's marriage were all fair and above board, nobody would say a word; but, as it has not been so, it will be our duty to find out the truth. If you should have a son, do not you think that you would turn every stone before you would have him defrauded of his rights?"

"I shouldn't think anyone would defraud him."

"But if this child be—anything else than what he pretends to be, there will be fraud. The Germains, though they think as I do, are frightened and superstitious. They are afraid of this imbecile who is coming over; but they shall find that if they do not move in the matter, I will. I want nothing that belongs to another; but while I have a hand and tongue with which to protect myself, or a purse—which is better than either—no one shall take from me what belongs to me." All this seemed to Mary to be pagan teaching, and it surprised her much as coming from her father. But she was beginning to find out that she, as a married woman, was supposed to be now fit for other teaching than had been administered to her as a child. She had been cautioned in her father's house against the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and could remember the paternal, almost divine expression of the dean's face as the lesson was taught. But now it seemed to her that the pomps and vanities were spoken of in a very different way. The divine expression was altogether gone, and that which remained, though in looking at her it was always pleasant, was hardly paternal.

Miss Mildmay—Aunt Ju as she was

called—and Guss Mildmay came and called, and as it happened the dean was in the drawing-room when they came. They were known to be friends of Mrs. Houghton's who had been in Brothershire, and were therefore in some degree connected even with the dean. Guss began at once about the new marchioness and the baby; and the dean, though he did not of course speak to Guss Mildmay as he had done to his own daughter, still sneered at the mother and her child. In the meantime Aunt Ju was enlisting poor Mary. "I should be so proud if you would come with me to the Institute, Lady George."

"I am sure I should be delighted. But what Institute?"

"Don't you know?—in the Marylebone-road—for relieving females from their disabilities."

"Do you mean Rights of Women? I don't think papa likes that," said Mary, looking round at her father.

"You haven't got to mind what papa likes and dislikes any more," said the dean, laughing. "Whether you go in for the rights or the wrongs of women is past my caring for now. Lord George must look after that."

"I am sure Lord George could not object to your going to the Marylebone Institute," said Aunt Ju. "Lady Selina Protest is there every week, and Baroness Banmann, the delegate from Bavaria, is coming next Friday."

"You'd find the Disabilities awfully dull, Lady George," said Guss.

"Everybody is not so flighty as you are, my dear. Some people do sometimes think of serious things. And the Institute is not called the Disabilities."

"What is it all about?" said Mary.

"Only to empower women to take their own equal places in the world—places equal to those occupied by men," said Aunt Ju, eloquently. "Why should one-half of the world be ruled by the ipse dixit of the other?"

"Or fed by their labours?" said the dean.

"That is just what we are not. There are one million one hundred and thirty three thousand five hundred females in England——"

"You had better go and hear it all at the Disabilities, Lady George," said Guss. Lady George said that she would like to go for once, and so that matter was settled.

While Aunt Ju was pouring out the

violence of her doctrine upon the dean, whom she contrived to catch in a corner just before she left the house, Guss Mildmay had a little conversation on her own part with Lady George. "Captain De Baron," she said, "is an old friend of yours, I suppose." She, however, had known very well that Jack had never seen Lady George till within the last month.

"No, indeed; I never saw him till the other day."

"I thought you seemed to be intimate. And then the Houghtons and the De Barons and the Germaines are all Brothershire people."

"I knew Mrs. Houghton's father, of course, a little; but I never saw Captain De Baron." This she said rather seriously, remembering what Mrs. Houghton had said to her of the love affair between this young lady and the captain in question.

"I thought you seemed to know him the other night, and I saw you riding with him."

"He was with his cousin Adelaide—not with us."

"I don't think he cares much for Adelaide. Do you like him?"

"Yes, I do; very much. He seems to be so gay."

"Yes, he is gay. He's a horrid flirt, you know."

"I didn't know; and what is more, I don't care."

"So many girls have said that about Captain De Baron; but they have cared afterwards."

"But I am not a girl, Miss Mildmay," said Mary, colouring, offended and resolved at once that she would have no intimacy and as little acquaintance as possible with Guss Mildmay.

"You are so much younger than so many of us who are girls," said Guss, thinking to get out of the little difficulty in that way. "And then it's all fish that comes to his net." She hardly knew what she was saying, but was anxious to raise some feeling that should prevent any increased intimacy between her own lover and Lady George. It was nothing to her whether or no she offended Lady George Germain. If she could do her work without sinning against good taste, well; but if not, then good taste must go to the wall. Good taste certainly had gone to the wall.

"Upon my word, I can hardly understand you!" Then Lady George turned

away to her father. "Well, papa, has Miss Mildmay persuaded you to come to the Institute with me?"

"I am afraid I should hardly be admitted, after what I have just said."

"Indeed you shall be admitted, Mr. Dean," said the old woman. "We are quite of the Church's way of thinking, that no sinner is too hardened for repentance."

"I am afraid the day of grace has not come yet," said the dean.

"Papa," said Lady George, as soon as her visitors were gone, "do you know I particularly dislike that younger Miss Mildmay."

"Is she worth being particularly disliked so rapidly?"

"She says nasty, impudent things. I can't quite explain what she said." And again Lady George blushed.

"People in society now do give themselves strange liberty; women, I think, more than men. You shouldn't mind it."

"Not mind it?"

"Not mind it so as to worry yourself. If a pert young woman like that says anything to annoy you, put her down at the time, and then think no more about it. Of course you need not make a friend of her."

"That I certainly should not do."

On the Sunday after this Lady George dined again with her father at Mr. Houghton's house, the dinner having been made up especially for the dean. On this occasion the Mildmays were not there; but Captain De Baron was one of the guests. But then he was Mrs. Houghton's cousin, and had the run of the house on all occasions. Again, there was no great party; Mrs. Montacute Jones was there, and Hetta—Miss Houghton, that is, whom all the world called Hetta—and Mrs. Houghton's father, who happened to be up in town. Again Lady George found herself sitting between her host and Jack De Baron, and again she thought that Jack was a very agreeable companion. The idea of being in any way afraid of him did not enter into her mind. Those horrid words which Guss Mildmay had said to her—as to all being fish for his net—had no effect of that nature. She assured herself that she knew herself too well to allow anything of that kind to influence her. That she, Lady George Germain, the daughter of the Dean of Brotherton, a married woman, should be afraid of any man,

afraid of any too close intimacy! The idea was horrible and disgusting to her. So that when Jack proposed to join her and her father in the Park on the next afternoon, she said that she would be delighted; and when he told her absurd stories of his regimental duties, and described his brother-officers who probably did not exist as described by him, and then went on to hunting legends in Buckinghamshire, she laughed at everything he said and was very merry. "Don't you like Jack?" Mrs. Houghton said to her in the drawing-room.

"Yes, I do; very much. He's just what Jack ought to be."

"I don't know about that. I suppose Jack ought to go to church twice on Sundays, and give half what he has to the poor, just as well as John."

"Perhaps he does. But Jack is bound to be amusing, while John need not have a word to say for himself."

"You know he's my pet friend. We are almost like brothers and sisters, and therefore I need not be afraid of him."

"Afraid of him! Why should anybody be afraid of him?"

"I am sure you needn't. But Jack has done mischief in his time. Perhaps he's not the sort of man that would ever touch your fancy." Again Lady George blushed, but on this occasion she had nothing to say. She did not want to quarrel with Mrs. Houghton, and the suggestion that she could possibly love any other man than her husband had not now been made in so undisguised a manner as before.

"I thought he was engaged to Miss Mildmay," said Lady George.

"Oh dear no; nothing of the kind. It is impossible, as neither of them has anything to speak of. When does Lord George come back?"

"To-morrow."

"Mind that he comes to see me soon. I do so long to hear what he'll say about his new sister-in-law. I had made up my mind that I shall have to kotou to you before long as a real live marchioness."

"You'll never have to do that."

"Not if this child is a real Lord Popenjoy? But I have my hopes still, my dear."

Soon after that Hetta Houghton reverted to the all-important subject. "You have found out that what I told you was true, Lady George."

"Oh yes—all true."

"I wonder what the dowager thinks about it."

"My husband is with his mother. She thinks, I suppose, just what we all think, that it would have been better if he had told everybody of his marriage sooner."

"A great deal better."

"I don't know whether, after all, it will make a great deal of difference. Lady Brotherton—the dowager I mean—is so thoroughly English in all her ways, that she never could have got on very well with an Italian daughter-in-law."

"The question is whether, when a man springs a wife and family on his relations in that way, everything can be taken for granted. Suppose a man had been ever so many years in Kamtchatka, and had then come back with a Kamtchatkean female, calling her his wife, would everybody take it as all gospel?"

"I suppose so."

"Do you? I think not. In the first place it might be difficult for an Englishman to get himself married in that country according to English laws, and in the next, when there, he would hardly wish to do so."

"Italy is not Kamtchatka, Miss Houghton."

"Certainly not; and it isn't England. People are talking about it a great deal, and seem to think that the Italian lady oughtn't to have a walk over."

Miss Houghton had heard a good deal about races from her brother, and the phrase she had used was quite an everyday word to her. Lady George did not understand it, but felt that Miss Houghton was talking very freely about a very delicate matter. And she remembered at the same time what had been the aspirations of the lady's earlier life, and put down a good deal of what was said to personal jealousy. "Papa," she said, as she went home, "it seems to me that people here talk a great deal about one's private concerns."

"You mean about Lord Brotherton's marriage."

"That among other things."

"Of course they will talk about that. It is hardly to be considered private. And I don't know but what the more it is talked about the better for us. It is felt to be a public scandal, and that feeling may help us."

"Oh, papa, I wish you wouldn't think that we wanted any help."

"We want the truth, my dear, and we must have it."

On the next day they met Jack De Baron in the Park. They had not been long together before the dean saw an old friend on the footpath and stopped to speak to him. Mary would have stayed too, had not her horse displayed an inclination to go on, and that she had felt herself unwilling to make an effort in the matter. As she rode on with Captain De Baron she remembered all that had been said by Guss Mildmay and Mrs. Houghton, and remembered also her own decision that nothing of that kind could matter to her. It was an understood thing that ladies and gentlemen, when riding, should fall into this kind of intercourse. Her father was with her, and it would be absurd that she should be afraid to be a minute or two out of his sight. "I ought to have been hunting," said Jack; "but there was frost last night, and I do hate going down and being told that the ground is as hard as brickbats at the kennels, while men are ploughing all over the country. And now it's a delicious spring day."

"You didn't like getting up, Captain De Baron," she said.

"Perhaps there's something in that. Don't you think getting up is a mistake? My idea of a perfect world is one where nobody would ever have to get up."

"I shouldn't at all like always to lie in bed."

"But there might be some sort of arrangement to do away with the nuisance. See what a good time the dogs have."

"Now, Captain De Baron, would you like to be a dog?" This she said, turning round and looking him full in the face.

"Your dog I would." At that moment, just over his horse's withers, she saw the face of Guss Mildmay, who was leaning on her father's arm. Guss bowed to her, and she was obliged to return the salute. Jack De Baron turned his face to the path, and seeing the lady raised his hat. "Are you two friends?" he asked.

"Not particularly."

"I wish you were. But, of course, I have no right to wish in such a matter as that." Lady George felt that she wished that Guss Mildmay had not seen her riding in the Park on that day with Jack De Baron.

CHAPTER XVII. THE DISABILITIES.

It had been arranged that on Friday evening Lady George should call for Aunt

Ju in Green-street, and that they should go together to the Institute in the Mary-lebone-road. The real and full name of the College, as some ladies delighted to call it, was, though somewhat lengthy, placarded in big letters on a long black board on the front of the building, and was as follows: "Rights of Women Institute. Established for the Relief of the Disabilities of Females." By friendly tongues to friendly ears, the College or the Institute was the pleasant name used; but the irreverent public was apt to speak of the building generally as the Female Disabilities. And the title was made even shorter. Omnibuses were desired to stop at the Disabilities; and it had become notorious that it was just a mile from King's-cross to the Disabilities. There had been serious thoughts among those who were dominant in the Institute of taking down the big board and dropping the word. But then a change of a name implies such a confession of failure! It had on the whole been thought better to maintain the courage of the opinion which had first made the mistake. "So you're going to the Disabilities, are you?" Mrs. Houghton had said to Lady George.

"I'm to be taken by old Miss Mildmay."

"Oh yes; Aunt Ju is a sort of first-class priestess among them. Don't let them bind you over to belong to them. Don't go in for it." Lady George had declared it to be very improbable that she should go in for it, but had adhered to her determination of visiting the Institute.

She called in Green-street, fearing that she should see Guss Mildmay, whom she had determined to keep at arm's distance as well as her friendship with Mrs. Houghton would permit; but Aunt Ju was ready for her in the passage. "I forgot to tell you that we ought to be a little early, as I have to take the chair. I daresay we shall do very well," she added, "if the man drives fast. But the thing is so important! One doesn't like to be flurried when one gets up to make the preliminary address." The only public meetings at which Mary had ever been present had appertained to certain lectures at Brotherton, at which her father or some other clerical dignitary had presided, and she could not as yet understand that such a duty should be performed by a woman. She muttered something expressing a hope that all would go right.

"I've got to introduce the baroness, you know."

"Introduce the baroness?"

"The Baroness Banmann. Haven't you seen the bill of the evening? The baroness is going to address the meeting on the propriety of patronising female artists, especially in regard to architecture. A combined college of female architects is to be established in Posen and Chicago, and why should we not have a branch in London, which is the centre of the world?"

"Would a woman have to build a house?" asked Lady George.

"She would draw the plans, and devise the proportions, and—and—do the æsthetic part of it. An architect doesn't carry bricks on his back, my dear."

"But he walks over planks, I suppose?"

"And so could I walk over a plank; why not as well as a man? But you will hear what the baroness says. The worst is that I am a little afraid of her English."

"She's a foreigner, of course. How will she manage?"

"Her English is perfect, but I am afraid of her pronunciation. However, we shall see."

They had now arrived at the building, and Lady George followed the old lady in with the crowd. But when once inside the door they turned to a small passage on the left, which conducted those in authority to the august room preparatory to the platform. It is here that bashful speakers try to remember their first sentences, and that lecturers, proud of their prominence, receive the homage of the officers of the Institute. Aunt Ju, who on this occasion was second in glory, made her way in among the crowd and welcomed the baroness, who had just arrived. The baroness was a very stout woman, about fifty, with a double chin, a considerable moustache, a low broad forehead, and bright, round, black eyes, very far apart. When introduced to Lady George, she declared that she had great honour in accepting the re-cog-nition. She had a stout roll of paper in her hand, and was dressed in a black stuff gown, with a cloth jacket buttoned up to the neck, which hardly gave to her copious bust that appearance of manly firmness which the occasion almost required. But the virile collars, budding out over it, perhaps sup-

plied what was wanting. Lady George looked at her to see if she was trembling. How, thought Lady George, would it have been with herself if she had been called upon to address a French audience in French! But, as far as she could judge from experience, the baroness was quite at her ease. Then she was introduced by Aunt Ju to Lady Selina Protest, who was a very little woman with spectacles, of a most severe aspect. "I hope, Lady George, that you mean to put your shoulder to the wheel," said Lady Selina. "I am only here as a stranger," said Lady George. Lady Selina did not believe in strangers, and passed on very severely. There was no time for further ceremonies, as a bald-headed old gentleman, who seemed to act as chief usher, informed Aunt Ju that it was time for her to take the baroness on to the platform. Aunt Ju led the way, puffing a little, for she had been somewhat hurried on the stairs, and was not as yet quite used to the thing, but still with a proudly prominent step. The baroness waddled after her, apparently quite indifferent to the occasion. Then followed Lady Selina, and Lady George, the bald-headed gentleman telling her where to place herself. She had never been on a platform before, and it seemed as though the crowd of people below was looking specially at her. As she sat down at the right hand of the baroness, who was of course at the right hand of the chairwoman, the bald-headed gentleman introduced her to her other neighbour, Miss Doctor Olivia Q. Fleabody, from Vermont. There was so much of the name, and it all sounded so strange to the ears of Lady George, that she could remember very little of it; but she was conscious that her new acquaintance was a miss and a doctor. She looked timidly round, and saw what would have been a pretty face, had it not been marred by a pinched look of studious severity and a pair of glass spectacles, of which the glasses shone in a disagreeable manner. There are spectacles which are so much more spectacles than other spectacles, that they make the beholder feel that there is before him a pair of spectacles carrying a face, rather than a face carrying a pair of spectacles. So it was with the spectacles of Olivia Q. Fleabody. She was very thin, and the jacket and collars were quite successful. Sitting in the front row, she displayed her feet, and, it may also be said, her trousers; for the tunic which she

wore came down hardly below the knees. Lady George's enquiring mind instantly began to ask itself what the lady had done with her petticoats. "This is a great occasion," said Dr. Fleabody, speaking almost but aloud, and with a very strong nasal twang.

Lady George looked at the chair before she answered, feeling that she would not dare to speak a word if Aunt Ju were already on her legs; but Aunt Ju was taking advantage of the commotion which was still going on among those who were looking for seats to get her breath, and therefore she could whisper a reply. "I suppose it is," she said.

"If it were not that I have wedded myself in a peculiar manner to the prophylactic and therapeutic sciences, I would certainly now put my foot down firmly in the cause of architecture. I hope to have an opportunity of saying a few words on the subject myself before this interesting session shall have closed." Lady George looked at her again, and thought that this enthusiastic hybrid who was addressing her could not be more than twenty-four years old.

But Aunt Ju was soon on her legs. It did not seem to Lady George that Aunt Ju enjoyed the moment, now that it was come. She looked hot, and puffed once or twice before she spoke. But she had studied her few words so long, and had made so sure of them, that she could not go very far wrong. She assured her audience that the Baroness Banmann, whose name had only to be mentioned to be honoured both throughout Europe and America, had, at great personal inconvenience, come all the way from Bavaria to give them the advantage of her vast experience on the present occasion. Like a good chairwoman, she took none of the bread out of the baroness's mouth—as we have occasionally known it to be done on such occasions—but confined herself to ecstatic praises of the German lady. All these the baroness bore without a quiver, and when Aunt Ju sat down she stepped on to the rostrum of the evening, amidst the plaudits of the room, with a confidence which to Lady George was miraculous. Then Aunt Ju took her seat, and was able for the next hour and a half to occupy her arm-chair with gratifying fainéant dignity.

The baroness, to tell the truth, waddled rather than stepped to the rostrum. She

swung herself heavily about as she went sideways; but it was manifest to all eyes that she was not in the least ashamed of her waddling. She undid her manuscript on the desk, and flattened it down all over with her great fat hand, rolling her head about as she looked around, and then gave a grunt before she began. During this time the audience was applauding her loudly, and it was evident that she did not intend to lose a breath of their incense by any hurry on her own part. At last the voices and the hands and the feet were silent. Then she gave a last roll to her head and a last pat to the papers, and began: "De manifest infairiurity of de tyrantsaix—" Those first words, spoken in a very loud voice, came clearly home to Lady George's ear, though they were uttered with a most un-English accent. The baroness paused before she completed her first sentence, and then there was renewed applause. Lady George could remark that the bald-headed old gentleman behind and a cadaverous youth who was near to him were particularly energetic in stamping on the ground. Indeed, it seemed that the men were specially charmed with this commencement of the baroness's oration. It was so good that she repeated it with, perhaps, even a louder shout. "De manifest infairiurity of de tyrant saix—" Lady George, with considerable trouble, was able to follow the first sentence or two, which went to assert that the inferiority of man to woman in all work was quite as conspicuous as his rapacity and tyranny in taking to himself all the wages. The baroness, though addressing a mixed audience, seemed to have no hesitation in speaking of man generally as a foul worm who ought to be put down and kept under, and merely allowed to be the father of children. But after a minute or two Lady George found that she could not understand two words consecutively, although she was close to the lecturer. The baroness, as she became heated, threw out her words quicker and more quickly, till it became almost impossible to know in what language they were spoken. By degrees our friend became aware that the subject of architecture had been reached, and then she caught a word or two as the baroness declared that the science was "adaapted only to de æstetic and comprehensive intelligence of de famale mind." But the audience applauded throughout as though every

word reached them; and when from time to time the baroness wiped her brows with a very large handkerchief, they shook the building with their appreciation of her energy. Then came a loud rolling sentence, with the old words as an audible termination, "de manifest infairiurity of de tyrant saix!" As she said this she waved her handkerchief in the air and almost threw herself over the desk. "She is very great to-night—very great indeed," whispered Miss Doctor Olivia Q. Fleabody to Lady George. Lady George was afraid to ask her neighbour whether she understood one word out of ten that were being spoken.

Great as the baroness was, Lady George became very tired of it all. The chair was hard and the room was full of dust, and she could not get up. It was worse than the longest and the worst sermon she had ever heard. It seemed to her at last that there was no reason why the baroness should not go on for ever. The woman liked it, and the people applauded her. The poor victim had made up her mind that there was no hope of cessation, and in doing so was very nearly asleep, when, on a sudden, the baroness had finished and had thrown herself violently back into her chair. "Baroness, believe me," said Dr. Fleabody, stretching across Lady George, "it is the greatest treat I ever had in my life." The baroness hardly condescended to answer the compliment. She was at this moment so great a woman, at this moment so immeasurably the greatest human being at any rate in London, that it did not become her to acknowledge simple compliments. She had worked hard and was very hot, but still she had sufficient presence of mind to remember her demeanour.

When the tumult was a little subsided, Lady Selina Protest got up to move a vote of thanks. She was sitting on the left-hand side of the chair, and rose so silently that Lady George had at first thought that the affair was all over, and that they might go away. Alas, alas! there was more to be borne yet! Lady Selina spoke with a clear but low voice, and though she was quite audible, and an earl's sister, did not evoke any enthusiasm. She declared that the thanks of every woman in England were due to the baroness for her exertions, and of every man who wished to be regarded as the friend of women. But Lady Selina was very quiet, making no ges-

tures, and was indeed somewhat flat. When she sat down no notice whatever was taken of her. Then very quickly, before Lady George had time to look about her, the doctor was on her feet. It was her task to second the vote of thanks, but she was far too experienced an occupant of platforms to waste her precious occasion simply on so poor a task. She began by declaring that never in her life had a duty been assigned to her more consonant to her taste than that of seconding a vote of thanks to a woman so eminent, so humanitarian, and at the same time so essentially a female as the Baroness Banmann. Lady George, who knew nothing about speaking, felt at once that here was a speaker who could at any rate make herself audible and intelligible. Then the doctor broke away into the general subject, with special allusions to the special matter of female architecture, and went on for twenty minutes without dropping a word. There was a moment in which she had almost made Lady George think that women ought to build houses. Her dislike to the American twang had vanished, and she was almost sorry when Miss Doctor Fleabody resumed her seat.

But it was after that—after the baroness had occupied another ten minutes in thanking the British public for the thanks that had been given to herself—that the supreme emotion of the evening came to Lady George. Again she had thought, when the baroness a second time rolled back to her chair, that the time for departure had come. Many in the hall, indeed, were already going, and she could not quite understand why no one on the platform had as yet moved. Then came that bald-headed old gentleman to her, to her very self, and suggested to her that she—she, Lady George Germain, who the other day was Mary Lovelace, the Brotherton girl—should stand up and make a speech! “There is to be a vote of thanks to Miss Mildmay as chairwoman,” said the bald-headed old man, “and we hope, Lady George, that you will favour us with a few words.”

Her heart utterly gave way and the blood flew into her cheeks, and she thoroughly repented of having come to this dreadful place. She knew that she could not do it, though the world were to depend upon it; but she did not know whether the bald-headed old gentleman might not have the right of

insisting on it. And then all the people were looking at her as the horrible old man was pressing his request over her shoulder. “Oh,” she said; “no, I can’t. Pray don’t. Indeed I can’t; and I won’t.” The idea had come upon her that it was necessary that she should be very absolute. The old man retired meekly, and himself made the speech in honour of Aunt Ju.

As they were going away, Lady George found that she was to have the honour of conveying the baroness to her lodgings in Conduit-street. This was all very well, as there was room for three in the brougham, and she was not ill-pleased to hear the ecstasies of Aunt Ju about the lecture. Aunt Ju declared that she had agreed with every word that had been uttered. Aunt Ju thought that the cause was flourishing. Aunt Ju was of opinion that women in England would, before long, be able to sit in Parliament, and practise in the Law Courts. Aunt Ju was thoroughly in earnest; but the baroness had expended her energy in the lecture, and was more inclined to talk about persons. Lady George was surprised to hear her say that this young man was a very handsome young man, and that old man a very nice old man. She was almost in love with Mr. Spuffin, the bald-headed gentleman usher; and when she was particular in asking whether Mr. Spuffin was married, Lady George could hardly think that this was the woman who had been so eloquent on the “infairiurity of de tyrant saix.”

But it was not till Aunt Ju had been dropped in Green-street, and the conversation fell upon Lady George herself, that the difficulty began. “You no speak?” asked the baroness.

“What, in public! Not for the world!”

“You wrong dere. Noting so easy. Say just as you please, only say it vera loud. And always abuse somebody or someting. You s’ould try.”

“I would sooner die,” said Lady George. “Indeed, I should be dead before I could utter a word. Isn’t it odd how that lady doctor could speak like that?”

“De American young woman! Dey have de impudence of—of—of everyting you please; but it come to noting.”

“But she spoke well.”

“Dear me, no; noting at all. Dere was noting but vords, vords, vords. Tank you; here I am. Mind you come again, and you shall learn to speak.”

Lady George, as she was driven home, was lost in her inability to understand it all. She had thought that the doctor spoke the best of all, and now she was told that it was nothing. She did not yet understand that even people so great as female orators, so nobly humanitarian as the Baroness Banmann, can be jealous of the greatness of others.

OLD FRENCH ACTORS.

MOLÉ.

DURING a long series of years, from 1729 to the commencement of the present century, the Théâtre Français successively possessed, as the representatives of what is usually termed high comedy, four actors of consummate ability, namely: Grandval, Bellecour, Molé, and Fleury. Of these, the two first may be said to have principally excelled in the personation of characters demanding a certain majesty of demeanour and courtly distinction of tone; whereas their successors—and more particularly the subject of our notice—were chiefly indebted for their popularity to the no less attractive qualities of refinement, elegance, and grace. Since the death of Fleury, the exquisite perfection of detail, which formerly rendered the types of *petit-maitre* and *marquis* leading features in French comedy, has become a thing of the past; neither Menjaud—an admirable speaker, but an ungainly representative of nobility—not, in our own day, Bressant—who never could quite shake off the effects of his long apprenticeship on minor boards—having, in their respective delineations of the ancient *répertoire*, in any way added to their reputation. This falling off may, it is true, be to some extent accounted for by the fact that, with the exception of Marivaux and the Turcaret of Le Sage, the ordinary stock-pieces of the theatre offer few opportunities to an actor desirous of emulating his great predecessors in the art of wearing the habit à la Française, and of displaying his address in “the nice conduct of a clouded cane;” such comedies as *L’Inconstant* and *Le Cercle*, the favourable reception of which was mainly attributable to the talent of their principal interpreter, whose career we purpose attempting to describe, having hitherto escaped the perils of a posthumous revival.

François René Molé was born in Paris, November 24, 1734; his father, an engraver by profession, but according to all

accounts of moderate ability, was with difficulty enabled from his scanty earnings to provide the means of subsistence for his wife and three sons, of whom our hero was the second. The family name was originally Molet, and it was not until several years after his reception at the *Comédie Française*, that the actor, for the sake of euphony, changed it to Molé, by the simple suppression of the final letter, and the addition of an accent. This alteration gave rise to an absurd report that he claimed the honour of descending from the illustrious magistrate, Mathieu Molé, upon which his comrade Dugazon laughingly remarked that, while he was about it, he had better have declared himself a descendant of Jaques du Molay, Grand Master of the Templars; adding, that the nobility of the sword was a hundred times preferable to that of the law-courts. Of Molé’s early youth little is known, but he appears to have been for a short period employed in a notary’s office, previous to his engagement as clerk by M. Blondel de Gagny, a financial magnate of the day. His passion for the stage, however, interfered considerably with the routine of his duties, and his stolen visits to the theatre only served to fan the flame. It is asserted that his employer, entering unexpectedly the room where the young man was supposed to be at work, found him perched on the table, the cloth of which served as a tragic mantle, and declaiming to a row of chairs, representing the audience, whatever scraps of the ancient *répertoire* he could recollect; imitating, more or less correctly, the tone and gestures of the actors he had seen. Luckily for Molé, M. Blondel de Gagny was no martinet; amused rather than displeased by the incident, he encouraged his stage-struck clerk to proceed with his performance, and imagining that he could discern in the crude essays of the inexperienced enthusiast a germ of real talent which only needed cultivation, recommended him to devote himself entirely to the study of the drama, kindly offering to continue the payment of his salary, without exacting any services in return. By this unhopd-for stroke of good fortune, Molé was enabled to frequent the society of the leading artistes of the day, and we shortly after find him enrolled, together with Lekain, in a company of amateurs, where his success was so decisive, that although he was not yet twenty years old, and had not gone through the usual provincial apprenticeship, the special

favour of a début at the Théâtre Français was at once accorded to him.

His first appearance there took place on the 7th of November, 1754, as *Britannicus* in Racine's tragedy of that name, and as *Olinde* in *Zéneïde*; and he subsequently played *Seïde* and *Nérestan*. His attractive exterior, and the unstudied grace of his manner, obtained for him an indulgent reception, and the *Mercure de France*, then edited by the Abbé Raynal, alluded in flattering terms to the promise held out by him; but it was generally allowed that his voice was weak, and that he was deficient in that indispensable assurance which a practical acquaintance with the business of the stage could alone supply. Convinced of the justice of these remarks, Molé quitted the capital, and for nearly five years remained in the provinces, performing successively at Lyons, Toulouse, and Marseilles. He then returned to Paris, and reappeared at the Comédie Française on January 28, 1760, in the character of *Andronic*. As on the former occasion, he was no doubt in a great measure indebted to his face and figure for the favour with which he was received; but it was soon found that during his absence he had acquired other more essential claims to the attention of connoisseurs. His voice had become materially stronger, his natural intelligence had ripened into comparative maturity, and, barring a certain stiffness of manner peculiarly noticeable in provincial actors, he trod the stage with confidence and ease. Such was Molé at this early period of his career. His progress towards perfection must have been indeed rapid, for seven years later he had attained the summit of his profession, and was justly regarded as one of the most brilliant ornaments of the first theatre in Europe.

Definitively admitted as a member of the society in 1761, he obtained a step in advance in the following year by the retirement of Grandval, in consequence of which Bellecour was left in possession of the leading characters in comedy, Molé being next in succession. About this time the latter achieved a signal triumph by his spirited performance of a young officer in *Heureusement*, a pleasant little trifle by Rochon de Chabannes; and by the charm of his manner, as well as by the graceful vivacity of his acting, not only enraptured the lady portion of the audience, but at once established himself in the favour of the general public, as the best repre-

sentative of the line of parts technically called "*les amoureux*" that had been seen for many a day. In 1763 he mainly contributed to the success of Collé's *Dupuis et Desronais* and La Harpe's *Warwick*, and in 1764 eclipsed all his former efforts by his brilliant creation of the marquis in Poinset's *Cercle*. Never before or since, according to the unanimous testimony of his contemporaries, did he appear to greater advantage than on this occasion. During the long run of the piece the theatre was crowded to excess, Molé's name was in everyone's mouth, and even the *petits-maitres* did not disdain to copy the airs and graces of so incomparable a model.

On the production of Sedaine's comedy, *Le Philosophe sans le Savoir*, in 1765, the part of Vanderk the younger was entrusted to Molé, who made it the object of special study, and was rewarded by an increase of popularity, which in the ensuing year was still further augmented by the announcement of his being seriously ill. Attacked by a severe inflammation of the chest, he was for some months in imminent danger, and, until the unfavourable symptoms had in some degree abated, the anxiety of his admirers knew no bounds. Both in Paris and at Versailles the state of his health was a common topic of conversation; bulletins reporting the slightest change in his condition were regularly exhibited at the theatre and at his own house, and so numerous were the visitors who came to make their enquiries in person, that the street where he lived was often completely blocked up by equipages. Even Louis the Fifteenth, contrary to his wont, caught the infection, and as a distinguishing mark of his interest in the invalid, sent him, by one of the gentlemen of the royal chamber, two "*gratifications*" of fifty louis each.

At length Molé was pronounced to be convalescent, but so weak that, in the opinion of the faculty, a considerable interval must necessarily elapse before he could with safety reappear on the stage. Meanwhile his strength must be kept up, and his table supplied with the very best wine that could possibly be procured. Hardly had this ultimatum been bruited abroad, when the cellars of his patrons were eagerly ransacked by their owners in search of the choicest nectar of Burgundy and Bordeaux; couriers were despatched in all directions for the express purpose of outbidding rival emissaries at any cost,

and it is said that in one day no fewer than two thousand bottles of the rarest vintages were delivered at his door. While, with the aid of these manifold stimulants, the patient was slowly recovering, Nicolet, the manager of the Gaité, profiting by the circumstance, attracted crowds to his theatre by the exhibition of a monkey, attired in a dressing-gown and slippers, and trained to imitate the attitudes and gestures of the popular comedian. This novel spectacle was alluded to by the Chevalier de Boufflers in a series of couplets, the first of which runs as follows:

Quel est ce gentil animal
Qui dans les jours de carnaval
Tourne à Paris toutes les têtes,
Et pour qui l'on donne des fêtes ?
Ce ne peut être que Molet,
Ou le singe de Nicolet.

When M. de Boufflers wrote this, he scarcely anticipated that the object of his satire would be one day his colleague as a member of the Institute of France.

After an absence of five months, during which, notwithstanding the combined talents of Lekain, Prévile, Bellecour, and their feminine auxiliaries, the receipts of the Théâtre Français had dwindled down to their minimum, Molé finally reappeared, February 10, 1767; and we learn from an eye-witness that a week before the appointed day every box in the house was taken, and on the opening of the doors so determined a struggle for admission ensued, that "the majority of the spectators who succeeded in forcing their way through the mass left their wigs, hats, and a portion of their coats behind them." The entrance of the favourite was the signal for a tremendous shout of welcome, which re-echoed for several minutes; whereupon, after respectfully demanding permission of the Countess de la Marche and the Princess de Lamballe, who were present, he delivered a short speech expressive of his gratitude, which was received with "a hurricane of applause." Nor was this all. A performance for his benefit was subsequently organised on the private stage of the Baron d'Esclapont. The price of the tickets was fixed at a louis, and as the theatre could only contain six hundred persons, the demand for them far exceeded the supply. The most illustrious members of the court, including princes and princesses of the blood royal, marshals of France, and even

the Archbishop of Lyons (Cardinal de Rohan) and the Bishop of Blois, were among the subscribers; and so liberal were the offerings of these aristocratic amateurs that the total proceeds of the evening amounted to a very large sum—which, it was whispered, Molé devoted to the purchase of jewels as a present to his mistress; but this part of the story needs confirmation. The pieces given were *Zelmire* and *L'Epoux par Superchérie*. In the tragedy *Mdlle. Clairon*, although retired from the stage, volunteered to represent the heroine; and her reappearance on this occasion gave rise to the following couplet, attributed, like its predecessors, to the Chevalier de Boufflers:

La digne et sublime Clairon
De la fille d'Agamemnon
A changé l'urne en tire-lire,
Et dans la pitié qu'elle inspire,
Va partout quêtant pour Molet,
A la cour et chez Nicolet.

Naturally, this misplaced enthusiasm met with its due share of ridicule, and the Marquis de Bièvre, never behindhand with a pun, exercised his wit unsparingly on so promising a subject; one of his best jokes was the exclamation on hearing of the actor's illness. "Molé est malade; quelle fatalité!" (quel fat alité).

In 1768, this celebrated artist gave a striking proof of the versatility of his talent, by his admirable performance of Beyerley in a French version, by Saurin, of *The Gamester*; the final scene of this lugubrious drama, in which he is represented in prison, and on the point of committing suicide, has been engraved, if we remember rightly, by Saint-Aubin. As a contrast, he undertook, a few months later, the part of a lively young villager in *Hylas et Silvie*, and in the following year ensured the triumphant success of *L'Orphelin Anglais*, by the pathos and energy of his acting. It would be needless to enumerate the variety of characters played by him from this period until 1778, when the death of Bellecour placed him in the position of leading actor in comedy, and entitled him, moreover, to a certain share of the tragic répertoire; a mention, however, of *L'Amant Bourru*, the author of which was his comrade Monvel, must not be omitted. So perfect was Molé's conception of the principal personage, that Monvel, between whom and his interpreter a want of cordiality had for some time existed, made the first step towards a recon-

ciliation, and they were better friends than ever.

At the annual closing of the theatre in the same year, the delivery of the complimentary address was entrusted to Molé; this task was rendered more than ordinarily difficult owing to the presence of Voltaire, whose goodwill it was deemed necessary to conciliate by a few laudatory allusions. This speech, although severely criticised by La Harpe as being prosy and ungrammatical, was well received by the public. In 1781, the revival of Corneille's *Nicomède* afforded our hero an opportunity of displaying his powers in tragedy, but the attempt was a decided failure; nor was he more successful in the *Pyrrhus* of Crébillon, a part originally created many years before by Quinault Dufresne. The result of these essays convinced him that classical tragedy was not his forte,* and resigning, though reluctantly, the sceptre of Melpomene to his young comrade Larive, he devoted himself henceforward exclusively to that particular branch of comedy in which he was by common consent unrivalled. Shortly after, M. de Bièvre made amends for his former witticisms by writing expressly for him *Le Séducteur*, and generously presented him with his own share of the receipts, which ultimately amounted to ten thousand livres. During the run of this piece Molé, when paying a visit to the author, apologised for his indifferent acting on the previous evening, on account of his having been hoarse—*enroué*. "En roué!" retorted the incorrigible punster, "that is exactly what you ought to be!"

The testimony of contemporary writers, with regard to the merits of the illustrious comedian, is, except in one solitary instance, highly favourable; Collé alone, who, by-the-way, should have remembered how deeply he was indebted to Molé for the success of *Dupuis et Desronais*, differing, according to his invariable custom, from the general verdict. "Molé," he says, "has become unbearable in comedy, in drama, and above all in tragedy. He has taken it into his head to force his voice, and plays every character like a madman. Were it not for his exagge-

ration, he might have excelled in juvenile tragedy; as it is, he is completely spoilt." In another passage of his journal his tone is somewhat milder. "To do him justice, I own that Molé is an agreeable actor, but he will never be a great one."

Horace Walpole, writing to Conway, November 12, 1774, says: "Molé is charming in genteel or in pathetic comedy, and would be fine in tragedy if he was stronger;" and Madame Le Brun, in her *Recollections*, confesses that she has seen "few actors gifted with so versatile and, above all, so seductive a talent." The portrait given of him by his comrade and successor Fleury is even more flattering: "He was the most complete personification of youth, grace, and vivacity, and I thought him never more attractive than when his memory failed him and he was at a loss for a word; he had then a certain way of arranging his shirt-frill, taking out his snuff-box, and playing with his sword-knot, that was absolutely delicious. So universal a favourite was he with both sexes, as to be called the conqueror of all wives and the friend of all their husbands."

Notwithstanding his extraordinary popularity, however, he was not omnipotent behind the scenes; for we learn from a curious unpublished letter addressed to the managing committee, but without date (probably about 1784), that he had in vain solicited the reception of his protégé Marsy. After complaining that an hour and a quarter's entreaties, backed by all the influence of the *Maréchal de Duras*, had not succeeded in inducing them to reconsider their determination, he says: "I have served the theatre for twenty-three years like a galley-slave, and I ask by way of recompense and as a favour what I should be justified in demanding as a right." This appeal likewise failed in shaking the resolution of the dramatic tribunal, Marsy being unanimously rejected. His protector was subsequently more fortunate in his pupils, three of whom—*Mdlles. Fanier, Doligny, and Candeille*—ranked among the most agreeable actresses of the *Comédie Française*; while a fourth, *Madame Chéron*, obtained a similar success at the opera. For his services as professor of declamation, he received a yearly pension of one thousand livres, dating from 1766.

Molé was extremely vain of his person, and so devoted an admirer of the fair sex,

* Nevertheless, he occasionally produced a great effect on the audience, for it is recorded that, while playing *Arcès* in *Blin de Sainmore's Orphanis*, the expression of his countenance was so terrible, as to cause a spectator in the pit to start up and exclaim, "Spare him! for Heaven's sake, spare him!"

that when under the influence of some new passion, which was perpetually occurring, he neglected the most important matters, as trifles comparatively unworthy of a moment's consideration; the principal sufferers by this unpunctuality being the authors of dramatic novelties who were anxious to secure him for their interpreter. One of these victims was Collin d'Harleville, then a young man, who, having obtained an introduction to the comedian, expressed a desire to read to him his piece, *L'Inconstant*, which he had just completed. Molé was all smiles and goodwill, and a day was fixed for the rendezvous; but on arriving at the appointed hour the dramatist found that the bird had already flown, and returning home in dudgeon told his friend what had happened. By the aid of the latter another meeting was arranged with a similar result, and this state of things went on for several months, until Collin, losing patience, invaded one evening the actor's dressing-room at the theatre, and reproached him bitterly for his conduct. "My good sir," replied Molé, "what you say is perfectly correct, and I owe you a thousand apologies; but were I to make a dozen appointments with you just now I should most certainly miss them all. Your only chance is to catch me at my toilette, and then I promise to listen to your piece." Collin took the hint, and two days after *L'Inconstant* was read and approved in the presence of Molé and his valet de chambre; the one reclining on a luxuriously-cushioned sofa, while the other was engaged in putting his master's hair in curl-papers.

Now and then the fascinating lady-killer met his match, and one instance is cited in which he assuredly did not come off with flying colours. He had promised an author to read a comedy expressly intended for him, and received in due time what appeared to be the manuscript, neatly tied up with a sky-blue ribbon. Naturally the roll remained unopened, and on each succeeding application for a speedy decision the writer was put off with promises, until Mole himself, wearied by the constant importunities of his visitor, gave him back his property exactly as it had been delivered to him, saying that he had read the piece and regretted that it was unsuitable. Far from being contented with this declaration, the dramatist persisted in demanding what particular faults were imputed to his comedy, in order that, if possible, they might be corrected; and

was informed in reply that the plot was insignificant, the dialogue tedious, and the dénouement unsatisfactory; upon which he coolly untied the ribbon, and with a low bow presented to the astonished and mortified comedian a roll of blank paper. This anecdote became afterwards the subject of a little comedy, entitled *La Matinée du Comédien de Persépolis*, in which Molé, much to his annoyance, was amusingly caricatured under the name of Belval. He had, in truth, as instinctive a dislike to playwrights of every description as Nestor Roqueplan, the manager of the Variétés thirty years ago, had to vaudevillistes;* but this did not prevent him from entering the lists himself in 1781 as author of *Le Quiproquo*, a trifling sketch which obtained a short run of five nights.

During the Reign of Terror, when several actors of the Comédie Française were arrested and thrown into prison, Molé by some lucky chance escaped proscription. He was, however, subsequently compelled, from want of resources, to accept an engagement in the company formed by Mlle. Montansier, and even to play Marat in a revolutionary drama called *Les Catalinas modernes*. After the fall of Robespierre, he rejoined the majority of his old comrades at the Théâtre Feydeau, where, as a compensation for the loss of his pension and private fortune, a benefit was accorded him, the receipts of which exceeded thirty thousand livres, the performances consisting of *Les Trois Sultanes* and *L'Amant Bourru*. His last appearance on the stage was in his favourite character *Le Vieux Célibataire*. In the course of the following night he was attacked by a sudden illness, which, notwithstanding occasional symptoms of amelioration, eventually proved fatal; and, after lingering for some months in the greatest agony, which he bore with extreme fortitude, he expired December 11, 1802, in his sixty-ninth year. The death of this great artist, although not unexpected, excited a profound sensation; his funeral was attended by an immense multitude, including the entire body of the Comédie Française, Monvel and Fleury at their head, as well as a deputation from the Institute, of which he was a member. A year later a performance, organised by the leading theatres of the capital for the benefit of his daughter,

* On being asked by a friend, who was aware of his antipathy, why he did not write pieces himself, Nestor retorted indignantly, "Why don't you black your own boots?"

Madame Raymond, was given at the Porte St. Martin.

Molé married, in 1769, Mdle. Hélène Pinet, better known by her stage name D'Epinay, an actress more remarkable for beauty than talent, who appeared at the Théâtre Français in 1761, and died in 1783. Of Molé's two brothers, both of whom had also embraced the dramatic profession, it need only be said that the elder, Molé d'Alainville, after two unsuccessful appearances in Paris, became ultimately manager of the Rouen Theatre; whereas Auguste, the younger, less ambitious, remained all his life a provincial actor.

CHRISTMAS.

How shall we keep our Christmas, you and I?
'Tis many a Yule-tide since we two together
Heard childish laughers blending merrily;
When the chill sunlight gleamed through wintry
weather,

When drifts lay deep around the old red house,
And arch and roof were gay with holly boughs.

And many a Yule since (dear, do you forget?)
You chose a spray all brightly berried over,
And as its leaves amid my curls you set,
Spoke in the first soft whisper of the lover,
And as the haze from girlish fondness swept,
The woman's heart from trance unconscious leapt.

Then just another Christmas, hand in hand,
Troth-plighted, we two heard the midnight chime,
And knew your path lay in a far-off land,
And smiled, in youth's gay fearlessness, at time;
Easy to wait, with love and life so strong.
Easy to wait! but oh, the years are long!

How shall I keep my Christmas? here at home
I smooth my braids—there's gray amid the gold—
I wear no holly now. The children come
And clamour for the merry sports of old;
I join the dancers, lead the carol strains:
They scarce can echo in Australian plains.

How do you keep your Christmas? Strange suns
shine,

Strange flowers blossom, brighter than our hollies;
Perhaps you bend to rosier lips than mine,
And make them smile at antique English follies!
Letters come rarer, words grow cold and few;
Broad leagues of sea and land 'twixt me and you.

Dear, do I wrong you? Life is hard and short,
Fortune is coy and chill, time flies so fast;
Wiser, perhaps, the passing rays to court,
Nor hoard our all of sunshine in the past;
Women will cling to dying dreams, you see,
And memory keeps my Christmas-day with me.

BOARD-SCHOOL BABIES.

THE YOUNGEST BORN OF THEM.

To one set enquiry necessary to be made by Board-school visitors, and others interested in securing regular attendance at schools of scholars, there keeps coming, in a high percentage of cases, but one set reply.

The little dialogue runs thus:

Q. Why has not Jinny Jones been to school lately? I have come to know.

A. I've been obliged to keep her at home, sir, because I've wanted her to—mind the baby.

The visitor may step to the next door—which is, literally, to the door on the other side of the landing; the visitor may mount to the floor above, knocking first at the front room and then at the back; the visitor may mount still higher, to the attics; or go down again low into the underground kitchen—it being the rule, unhappily, in metropolitan dwellings, that each and every one of these doors closes in a homestead; and though the visitor will at times be told of individual illness, of “no boots,” of other valid causes, it is pretty nearly always on the repetition of his question that he is met by the repetition of the answer too. At first this regular reply, and the state of things it indicated, seemed odd. It was like an anniversary, ever compelled in its period to return. But it could not stop at oddity. Being there, something had to be done with it; and the difficulty rose, how should it be taken?

Now, the School Board for London—to the action of which this present sketch happens alone to refer—having been established to solve the problem of how to do the work it was set to do, and having absolutely at heart the full desire and intention to solve the problem, gave to this unexpected and puzzling matter its serious consideration. Is Jinny Jones obliged to mind the baby? In that lay consideration No. 1—Cannot mothers mind their own babies? Or, from another side, cannot babies mind themselves? Debates lingered over the points, sub-committees sat, reports were drawn up, debates were renewed, members waxed controversial and philosophical, amendments were proposed, meetings were adjourned. Taking the consideration, Cannot mothers mind their own babies?—into which, at last, the others merge—it was seen that working mothers have to do the family washing, the family cooking, the family cleaning—if they are mothers worthy of the name; it was seen, moreover, that it must be awkward to do family washing—the same being an operation that implies standing at a steaming wash-tub, pouring out boiling water, much rubbing, scrubbing, rinsing, and other active muscular mysteries—if, at the same time, there be the inconvenience of a baby lying in the arms, or of

a toddling baby ever running into danger at the knee. And it was further seen that mothers have sometimes to leave home to do some other family's washing, some other family's cooking, some other family's cleaning—have to go out, in short, to do that bit of work that must be done to eke out weeks' incomes, and bring the means of providing rent and food and firing somewhat level with the rent and food and firing requisite—and that in any or all of these cases, for mothers to have anything to do with their own babies is entirely impossible. When these hard and plain facts had, not without sympathy, been recognised, the School Board members found themselves driven in a corner. Common sense was let to walk in and take full possession; it had its supremacy established, and a remedy was proposed.

There should be a room set aside at a given Board school, in which scholars might leave their babies as they passed to their classes; in which babies should be perfectly taken care of by an appointed nurse; out of which scholars should fetch their babies when it was twelve o'clock of mornings, when it was half-past four o'clock of afternoons, and the scholars had finished their lessons in their classes, and were going home.

"Just a crèche!" hasty-headed people will cry: they who have only caught the outline of the decision, and have not given patience to the details.

But these people are wrong. A Board-school baby-room is not a crèche, and does not fulfil the purpose of a crèche. At a crèche, babies need be no more than three weeks old—that is no exaggeration, there are thousands of mothers in the metropolis who have been driven to stand all day at the wash-tub, or its equivalent, when their babies have been only three weeks born. At a crèche, babies are received for a long, uninterrupted day of twelve hours; babies are fed with warm food out of bottles, are put to sleep in swinging cradles, are rocked in comforting arms, are charged for at the rate in most places of threepence a day, making eighteenpence a week—which is cheap, even then; or, in other rarer spots, at only twopence daily, making the smaller fee weekly of one shilling. Besides, at a crèche anybody's baby is admissible—provided the mother come properly recommended. It may be a young wife's first pledge, brought in because necessity forces her to earn her living, and she cannot

earn a living and dandle a baby too. It may be the last little Benjamin of an experienced matron, all the rest of whose flock are grown up and gone away. In either case the little nursling may be carried in; the proper pence are paid for it, and in its tiny citizenship all things are free. But in no case at a Board-school baby-room, let it be fully noted, could any such baby gain admittance; and, in addition, every other circumstance is changed. There is the price—it is one penny for the whole of the five days that make up the Government scholastic week. There are the hours—they are strictly cut up and divided into school attendances; from a quarter to nine to noon, and from two till half-past four, with the proper scholastic interval of two hours for dinner. There is the baby's age—it must be weaned, poor mite; it must be just able to rear itself upon its uncertain little legs, if only by the help of the table or a chair. There is the food—it must be nothing liquid, wanting hand-feeding or warming on a fire; it must be only bread and butter, bread and treacle, bread and dripping, dry bread, plain; something that can be held in the little fist, more as comfort and occupation, that in no sense can take the place of a regular meal. There is, above all, the limitation—it is the rigid and unfailing law that no baby is eligible unless the Jinny or Johnny who would have minded it is on the regular roll of the school; would have been kept away from school to do the minding; will go straightway to his or her place in the school, directly the baby-room door has been opened on application, and the incommoding little baby has been left. And is it not clear, in every item of these, how all rivalry with crèches is avoided? Had any institution, of any name, existed, indeed, that was doing the work of the Board-school baby-room, the thought of rate-paid babies'-rooms would never have occurred, the establishment of them need never have been discussed. To sum them up in their entirety, their intention is to do the nurse-work that school-girls and school-boys under thirteen are put to do; is to do it only for just as long as the school hours of these school-girls and school-boys continue. When it comes to playtime, jurisdiction is over; Jinny's and Johnny's play has to be "baby" again, and Jinny and Johnny have to do it. Scholars so young do not—or ought not—to have the charge of an absolute in-

fant; they could not feed it, they could not tend it for any length of time, if there be the intention to keep it alive; by the School Board for London, therefore, absolute infants could have no recognition. But the nurse-work of scholars so young may be allowed—under stress—to be the charge of little short-coated creatures, with a few teeth in them, with a little toddling power in them, with a little chatter, with a little show of individual sense and will, with a just-developed faculty to enjoy abstraction over a toy. As a fact, all working-class elder brothers and sisters would have to mind babies of this kind, off and on at intervals, on most of the days they live, from baby-waking time till the late lamplight, when working-class babies are put to bed; and just as far as these the duty of the Board was clear. It would take such little creatures during the few hours daily when elder brothers and sisters must attend their classes, when standards have to be worked up to, when there is forced to be some endeavour to obtain results. Cutting the tie of baby thus far, though, the Board would have to leave what might happen previous to those hours, or in between them, or after they were passed. Did any difficulty exist—it was a difficulty, in legal parlance, not before the court.

Here, then, is the rapid statement of the *raison d'être* of a baby-room in a Board school, of its aim and scope, of its most salutary limit. We must step inside now, with the intention of seeing and chronicling its working.

Babies are crawling, babies are on the run, babies are trotting, toddling, standing, sitting; they are on the floor, on the low benches, on the easy gallery, on tiny Windsor chairs. But where can there be a beginning? Where shall be put the first stroke, to dot down some tiny figure and fit it, to give the true notes and tune of some little joyful crow? There are twenty-nine tiny men and women in all, twenty-nine lissome little bodies, twenty-nine pairs of venture-some little legs, twenty-nine pairs of eager and exploratory little arms; more eager and exploratory lesser hands and thumbs and fingers than there can be quick mastery of; twenty-nine exultant and incessantly-used little baby throats. Can there be comprehension of the puzzle of it, and comprehension of the noise? Stay—a small alteration must be made, as far as sound and movement are concerned. That

figure twenty-nine must be written one less—twenty-eight; for the youngest baby of the whole is fast asleep. It is a tiny and feeble babykin, only fifteen or sixteen months old, unable to hold its own against shouting and careering bits of comrades half a year its seniors; so it has been laid, safe from short hits, and short runs, and shorter tumbles, on a low bed made flat upon the floor. This is called a fold—the name having nice association with young lambs being put to shelter. It is legless, postless; it is a great five or six feet square padded oasis or elysium, guarded by a surrounding wooden rail or fence, too close to be crept through, and too high for little legs to scale; and into it the small piece of humanity has been put, its pinched little face still enough, its pale and too flaccid little limbs thoroughly in repose. Yet, after all, is there much conceivable difference between the din and clamour of twenty-eight babies, and the din and clamour of twenty-nine? Does the expert live, able to give testimony, upon the instant, that twenty-nine babies are not vociferating in a given place, that an error has been made, and that there are only twenty-eight? It is not credible, easily, with the babble about us here. There is a distracting variety among these babies, a diversity of interests to be found in this baby-room, which to the lover of infantine humanity is little short of bewildering.

Thus, if we stoop here, to pat a group of little curly pates, or give a touch to a dozen of little chubby hands, there is a counter attraction over there, in a row of little upturned faces that have no shy withdrawal in them, but ever so much welcome in their sharp round eyes. Thus, again, if we move across the room, to find out why a cluster of Lilliputian figures is so intent and chattery on some treasure-trove rolling upon the floor, there is the need to tread back to the doorway the very instant, to have the fun of a set of baby-intellects making a new discovery, and to see which way it goes. It makes it a difficulty to look from the babies busy crawling up the gallery's first step, to the babies busy sitting and shuffling to transport themselves down. It makes it a difficulty to look from the babies busy bumping their little fists upon the desks, to the babies busy, with very considerable baby energy, bumping other little babies' heads. And so many opposing duties or inclinations spring up, too, to double the difficulties and the bewilderment as the eyes go round

and round. There comes the feeling, for one to be mentioned, that all the ill-used and beseeching little babies must be taken up and kissed; there comes the feeling that all the bellicose little babies must be talked to, and tickled, and told they are little rogues. To stop this the knowledge presses itself upon attention that babies, no matter how small and young, take up room—that it is impossible, therefore, to nurse many more than a pair at once; and to stop this also, from the other view, comes the knowledge that reproof—and fun mingled—had better be left to those who hold the power, since they know best how much reproof can be borne by such strange little folks as these. Still, see! this hard toy horse-trunk will be hurled crash down on the top of this little creature's head!

But the nurse is as rapid as she should be.

"Tommy, Tommy!" she cries, as she gives a saving spring. "Naughty little Tommy!" And in the motherliness of her, and her express-speed readiness, she slaps Tommy's aggressive little hand, which shoots the horse-barrel out of it, harmless, and lets his intended little victim go on her way, still crooning her baby-happiness, unconscious and serene.

Consider, however, that nurse's wickedness—according to School Board laws and penalties. She had inflicted corporal punishment; she had inflicted it herself; she had inflicted it at the very moment of the commission of the contributory crime! It is grave; in every clause of it. For it was quite open to that nurse to have waited for the peripatetic flagellator, it has been jocosely proposed that all School Board school-officials should wait for. It was quite open to that nurse to have had London School Board law well in her head. This enacts that there is to be no corporal punishment, except in the rarest of rare cases; that the infliction of it is the function of the chief official only; that it is to be administered at a certain appointed time, when all vengeance, indignation, and so on, shall have had good chance of cooling down. More. This law enacts, after many resolutions, after much discussion, that a record is to be made of every hit, slap, blow, or any other punishment imposed or given; and it may be here stated—boldly—that so far from that nurse fulfilling this last proviso, it is believed that, even if the books of the recording angels could be searched, there would not

be any entry revealed of her high offence, anywhere!

But the knottiness of this point, even when seriously argued, is known. It is better to give whole attention up to the little babies. To the eyes, to the ears, to the heart, they are yielding plenty of opportunity for observation.

"Here, Charley Matthews!" the nurse is crying to one of them. It is a name that has been heard before. We feel sure the tiny new owner of it will have some merry interest. "Here, Charley Matthews!" she repeats. "Charley, I say! Come!"

The little 'mite approaches. He is the smallest bit of a boy; the merest twig of independent babydom; overflowing with fun, or there would be nothing in a name, indeed, thoroughly conscious he has only been called to have his little hand taken, and his little hand shaken, and to give a smile, and to run away.

"Ah, Charley, Charley!" the nurse goes, as this last operation is merrily performed. "Ah!"—with a turn to give some historic or biographic explanation—"he's a regular little Tartar is that Charley! Regular!"

And so it seemed; for as the small creature uttered a lively crow, he executed a series of lively pirouettes, otherwise cavalry caracoles and demi-voltes; and a pale, bony boy, as big again as Charley, being too near, a pirouette took the pale, bony boy like a battering-ram, made him reel from the shock of it, spun him right down on to the floor—flat.

Howl—that was the result, in orthodox fortissimo. Howl, again—with the bony boy's limbs still outspread where they had been flung, in orthodox star-fish-like adhesiveness. And whilst the nurse was tilting up the bony boy erect again, did Charley Matthews turn back from his whirligig career to offer pity and consolation? Not for a moment. These came from a tiny Louey, a miniature brunette; distinguished by tiny brown eyes, by tiny brown curls, by tiny white teeth; by tiny olive forehead, and cheeks, and chin. And she was so tiny, was tiny Louey, she had no words to accompany her sympathy and solace. The heart of her had been formed the lengthy period of two years about, before her articulation, so this made her merely come, bringing her little figure, and her little smile; made her merely pop a marble into the bony boy's hand; smile up at him again, wait to see his face relax, and to hear his howl sub-

side, and then, quite contented, it made her, just as prettily, go her own way again.

Incongruously, with over-much diversity, the figure next in the foreground is a wide, carrot-headed little urchin, all lump and waddle; low comedy stamped on his grinning features, unmistakably.

"Now then, Paddy!" cries the nurse, as he butts himself into notice by a heavy attack upon her knee. "We're to look at you, are we, Paddy? Come along, then, show your tricks!"

Which Paddy did, to the extent of going plump down on to his plump hands, and of sticking up one plump little foot; an amount of topsy-turvydom that quite fulfilled his sense of acrobatic art, and gave his grins still greater width and comedy.

"It's capital!" cried the nurse, in lively praise. "Oh yes, Paddy, it's capital!"

Whereupon Paddy, full of the pleasure of commendation, as well as the pleasure of performance, waddled off into a group of other babies, and was lost to sight there.

But his very departure was as fruitful as his presence. As his small person was self-removed, there was displayed another little soul awaiting the nurse's friendly and approved attentions.

"Why!" the nurse said, amused. "If I didn't think there was somebody pulling at my dress! So it's you, little Dora, is it?"

By which time it was quite clear that it quite clearly was. And such a mite of a Dora! Such a meek, fragile, flaxen little thing! The fairest of figures; the most enticing patience and submission.

"Yes? Well?" went the nurse's question. "Eh?" And then she burst into the fullest comprehension. "A-a-ah! I see—of course. Dora has brought the rope, to skip; and Dora wants me to help her twist it. All right—come along."

Then a bright little smile shot over the sweet little patience, a little hand came out of its trustful hiding, and it was seen that Dora had a skipping-rope trailing behind her, and was in gentle glory at having gained her end.

"Come!" cried the nurse then; bending low to twist as Dora twisted, and to give to touch and time every accommodation. "Who'll skip, who'll jump over the rope? Make haste!"

A bunch of adventurous candidates

answered the invitation. A toddle brought them; conscious purpose shone upon them; they stood radiantly and valiantly by. Poor little souls, they were such tinies, such babies, the humblest attainment could only come out of their joy of intention and endeavour. Nurse and the little Dora had to hold the rope quite still and flat upon the boards in order to let them think of jumping; they had to think of jumping some seconds before they could muster courage to attempt it; as their bravest venture, they could only lift up one little foot and land it, lift up the other little foot and land it, getting that way across to the farther side of the rope, without any skip at all. But it was charming, out of its very smallness and simplicity. It was excellently good. From it there was seen what a little thing gives pleasure to a child; how delightfully a child meets that little pleasure; how delightfully a child owns that the pleasure is really there. No scorn of the skipping came from these tiny people; no deyring of the value of it, or complaint that it was not something different, or more. Only able to crow, and coo, and babble, their little hearts could feel ecstasy, and aim, and gratitude, newborn as their little hearts were; and what was better still, they were not ashamed of their pleasure, or of their showing it. It is possible that older people might, in this respect (if not in many others), learn something well worth learning from these mites.

And the same charm of enjoyment sprang from these little babies' toys. The toys were old, the toys were crushed, were stained, were broken; the toys were chipped, and dented, had been banged and beaten till they were almost shapeless stumps; but the children clutched them, nursed them, sang to them, dressed them up—were quite as satisfied and occupied, as if they had come, new, and smart, and costly, out of a high-priced bazaar. Some of these were headless horses, some were horseless heads; they were just as much "gee-gees" as when they had been whole; they were being galloped about on the especial foot-high and rimmed baby-table, to baby-imagination doing "gee-gee" duty unabridged. There were empty cotton-reels amongst these toys, also; there were humming-tops, dismasted and disarmed; there were the bulbs of wicker-work rattles, and be-headed dolls, and Kinder Garten cubes, and the boxes these had been in, and old

dolls' dresses, and old dolls' bodies—the sawdust substance of them gone, their bodies, to critical natures, only empty rag. It was of no consequence. These philosophic and contented Board-school babies fingered the odd old things, and built them up, and clattered them, and laid them low, and set them rolling, and tried to make them spin, with the same avidity and enjoyment as if shapelessness had been comeliness, as if damages had been the condition of being “spick and span.” Observe, for proof, this tiny little girl at this corner of the little low table—Pamela, nurse calls her, a Pamela smart, with a necklace of gay blue beads—is rocking one of these dilapidated doll-bits, and singing it to sleep; this other tiny little girl, at this other corner of the table, is stretching some blue gauze round a horse-trunk—it is so many inches of flattened wooden cylinder, not an atom more—which horse-trunk, to her mind, will soon be a cherished baby for her to dandle, and fondle, and get to sleep as well. Further—this very begrimed horse-trunk undergoing metamorphosis into a baby, is about to be wrenched from its dresser by an envious Jimmy; the envious Jimmy is wrenching it spitefully, will have succeeded in wrenching it in another instant, and have run victoriously away, but that the nurse's watchfulness is not at fault here either; and she sees the action, and promptly stays it. Then there is a little Alice, pointed out as having been so eager and interested over another toy, a day or two before, she had bitten her opponent's finger till she had broken the tender skin; besides which, there is ample testimony of affection and admiration, of appropriation and ownership, in many a snatch and a counter-clutch, in many a sharp tussle to seize and to secure, in many a greedy gathering of more than little arms can hold, going on at intervals between plump baby, and delicate baby, between Saxon baby, and baby who is all nut-brown, to the right, to the left, far away, and in the centre, and all round.

Yet it must not be concluded that newer toys would be received by these Board-school babies with apathy or disdain. The sweepings of some richer babies' toy-cupboards would soon set such an absurd supposition at rest; to be sure of which, mark what occurs when the nurse takes from a cupboard a handful of marbles, and throws them amongst the little people in a carefully-directed shower. A merry

scamper follows; a merry shout; a merry clutch of conquest; a pertinacious peep after such of the marbles as have rolled themselves hopelessly under the shelter of the low bed; a clamorous cluster of little heads round a marble that has rolled itself into a just-fitting knot-hole in the planks of the floor. Down goes a broken toy that has previously been coaxed into doing duty for a tower; off toddles an Uncle Harry, aged two years and a half, with a plaster on his forehead; off toddles his nephew Dick, three months his senior, after him; off toddles, too, a tiny baby-girl in blue—there are twin-babies under her at home, nurse deplores, mere fragile baby as she is—and even a sparkle rises in the plaintive eyes of the only really dirty baby present. One little chap alone, overdone with sleepiness, and rolling his curly head from heavy side to side, remains unmoved among the mêlée; and to him nurse gives her cheery and resolute attention.

“Sammy! Sammy!” she cries, picking up the little man, and giving him a friendly toss. “Wake up, little Sammy. Come!”

But babyhood and summer weather, and perhaps much play and preposterous early rising, have given sleep so tight a hold on Master Sammy, that his eyelids still droop and his little head still rolls. Nurse, therefore, has to try again. This time she sings, and she lays Sammy flat upon her lap, insidiously:

Tickle Sammy,

she begins with an adroit touch:

Tickle Sammy on the knee,
Tickle Sammy on the knee,
If he laughs—no Sam is he!

And the little fellow does laugh; power of nurse's spell is excellently vindicated.

For nurse has an absolute and legitimate object in getting her little charges all on the alert and to the fore. It is their lunch time; and she wants toys, and all other objects but lunch, discarded for as many moments as baby-nature will permit. Her beginning is to clap her hands; and the babies, young as they are, understand it, and all look wakefully round.

“Get ready,” she cries. “All of you sit down. Here it comes.”

It was done in an instant. Every baby sat, waddling to its seat, toddling to its seat, running to it with a cheer, seating itself down plump just where it happened to be. Eleven of the babies, as it chanced,

seated themselves in a neat fat row, shoulder to shoulder, close up, their little fat hands patting up and down upon the low desk in front of them, as if they were tiny artisans tinily at work. It was no matter; there was nurse at her cupboard—a fortunate Mother Hubbard—there were all the baby-eyes fixed upon her and it, intently. Ah, but once more, that nurse's terrible wickedness! She did not distinguish between Johnny's piece of bread, which might have had dripping on it, and Tommy's piece of bread, which might have had treacle; she did not distinguish between Polly's crust, which might have been upper, and Sally's crust, which might have been kissing; she made no effort, it must be insisted, as crowning head of the indictments against her, to sort out those twenty-nine packets of queer household, wrapped up in those twenty-nine crumpled fragments of very queer newspaper, or even to count whether she had twenty-nine packages to match her twenty-nine babies; but with even hand, with a weighing eye, she broke her bread as she took it from her shelf, and she gave a bit to a baby, till she had given a bit to every baby—just the same all round. It was communism blatant, communism of the deepest, most sanguinary red. Was it that there came excuse because the babies sat and munched so busily—because the babies sat and sucked, in sweet serenity, making grave pursuit of crumbs that fell, and picking them up assiduously? To admit it would be to admit the principle, that the greatest happiness to the greatest number atones for everything; and in this a host of politicians see high danger. Let it be left alone.

Play succeeded to this arch treachery—play that had the same features as before the happy eating, and the same glad noise. At its end, it was the end of the morning's sitting also, and the nurse had to get the babies ready, that they might go.

"I get my toys away from them first," she said; "for babies as they are—and there's some babies you can love, and there's some babies you can't love, do what you will—they'd take all my toys away if I didn't look very sharp. They do take them, indeed, though I do look sharp; and I had ten little india-rubber balls the other day, those hard ones, and now I haven't one. They tuck them down their little bosoms, or they push them behind their little pinafores, or they hold

them tight—such things as marbles—in their little hands. Ah, it's a handful to look after so many of them properly!"

And it was a handful—when an order had been given to pick up the marbles, and they were being actively searched for and gradually brought in—to dress so many of them properly, especially with such bits of torn and flimsy garments to dress the little creatures in. Yet they helped to their dressing by every means in their small power. Jimmy knew Jimmy's hat, for instance, when Jimmy saw it; Charley knew Charley's; John knew John's. Annie held up her hand to claim Annie's neck-tie; Bessie was ready to receive Bessie's little cape. Then, as each child was equipped—an equipment that brought the wish that unoccupied young ladies would make it the fashion to go and sew new elastic on to little hats, and new buttons and strings on to little jackets and capes and cloaks—each little child betook itself to some low benches nurse had moved to near the door, and quietly took its seat on one of them. Each little baby quietly amused itself, too, till its big brother or sister came.

There was no doubt whose baby each was, every time the door was opened and a bonâ fide Board-school scholar was shown. Real claimants these, they had but to say, "Here I am," and hold out their arms, when the absolutely right baby held out its arms in turn, shuffled down and waddled off if it could, waited to be lifted up and kissed, if to shuffle and to waddle away were accomplishments it had not lived months enough to attain. All the little people were cleared off when only a few minutes had passed; over were the little greetings; comforted were the little arms clinging round elders' necks; divested were the small benches of all their baby-sitters, with the Board-school baby-room free to be thoroughly ventilated for its next assemblage when two hours had gone. And then, passing out again in a few more minutes into Angler's-gardens, N., where this experimental Board-school baby-room is to be found, it was easy to see the very same babies—or others curiously like them—seated upon the kerbs, blistering in the sun, playing with a bit of a discarded lettuce-leaf, with a chance pea-pod, a cork, a stick, some loose street-stones; and it was more than easy to see the value of the shelter and the care from which they had just come, and to wish that such shelter and such care

should soon be the universally-adopted rule. If this sketch should help to show unconverted Board-school managers how admirably the baby-room system is working, it will be well.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XII. FECI SURDUS.

ON a certain Monday, the 15th of June, Andrew Gordon, full of self-contempt for the triumph of Comus, had resolved to devote his life to the composition of a great work which should be the embodiment of all art thenceforth and for ever.

On Thursday, the 23rd of March—twenty-six years later—John March wrote at the end of the score "Finis." The work was done.

A work indeed! It was the whole of a strong man's head, and heart, and soul. It contained not a chord, not a note, that did not contain the best and the whole of them all. "Finis"—after the concentrated devotion of the zeal of youth, the sustained energy of manhood, the pathetic solemnity of the crowning labour of age. To write the word "Finis" was like self-inflicted death. Who cannot imagine for himself what it means? It was hard to convince himself that he could do no more. His first impulse was that of triumph—but his second was to feed the flames with his score. Pride, and love, and strange inconsistent hatred for the work of his own hands possessed him, and, till he lighted his pipe, made him tremble and turn cold with the feeling that, at last, the one work of his whole life was done. Henceforward the score, which was himself, was delivered from his own hands into those of destiny.

What had not the work meant for him? It was as if every note had been a drop of his heart's blood, every chord a piece of his brain—as if, now that all was over, he had no heart left and no brain. It was as if he had transmuted himself into the pile of manuscript, which lay—finished—before him. It had been the whole of his outward life, and the whole of a hitherto unrecognised inner life besides. He could remember the origin of every phrase, and renew the labour by which he

had reduced the inspiration of passing moods of feeling into one consistent whole, in which no slightest trace of any passing mood might be discerned. For the work was to represent bloodless and pulseless art, not to reflect the man; whatever blood and pulse it contained was to be purely and utterly its own.

Did he regard it with affection or with hatred, as he sat over it and smoked slowly, and turned over the pages lingeringly? To answer that, one must learn to distinguish between self-love and self-hate—which no man has ever yet done, or ever will do. Who, when middle age is passing, can bear to dwell with approval upon every note and every chord of the score that his life's hand has written? Only, most lives are written with pencil upon slates, that are sponged over from time to time; his in sounds, fixed upon art henceforth indelibly.

Hitherto, ever since he had first met Noëmi on the Corso, he had treated, or rather looked back upon, life as a dream, from which the Score alone stood out as the one reality in a world of shadows. But now, from the pages before him, looked out the ghost of one evening when he saw the then unknown name of "Mademoiselle Clari" among the theatrical announcements of the gazette for that day.

He used now and then to go to the opera, out of a musician's habit, though he never took his wife with him. She had been consecrated to art. And surely if any man ever had a right to order any woman's life, it was he. He had taken her from the Ghetto, and worse—from Il Purgatorio and La Purgatoria. He had trained her to be Empress of Art—which is higher and more glorious, surely, than to be a mere queen of song. He had given her a woman's full life instead of a slave's. He had given her luxury for penury, and had only asked in exchange that she should live happily and peacefully; that she might, at the cost of a little labour, be the grand instrument for ensuring the triumph of artistic right over inartistic wrong. That was his point of view; and it was just, and generous also, beyond all question.

As for who Mademoiselle Clari was, he cared no more than he knew. One does not distinguish butterfly from butterfly, and it might well be that many a prima donna was famous without his knowing anything about her, even by name. When he went to the San Gennaro that evening,

it was with the expectation of hearing a voice, and nothing else—and that not necessarily a voice worth hearing.

The eyes, indeed, never see but what they expect to see. They expected to see Lucrezia Borgia, and they saw her. But no disguise could deceive his ears.

There was but one great voice on earth for him; and he heard it now—it, and no other. A voice never has a twin, even if in other respects Noëmi might have her double somewhere. The second note was enough to tell him that all his precautions had been in vain—that marriage itself had not proved a bond strong enough to keep Noëmi out of the whirlpool, and his work with her. It was more than hard—it was cruel. The commonest gratitude should have been enough to make Noëmi gladly and thankfully docile, even if she proved unable to catch one breath of his inspired enthusiasm for the triumph of the cause.

He did not exaggerate what had happened. It was not merely that his wife had openly defied him. His heart had unwittingly begun to know her well enough, and had already learned that he had to deal with an instrument, glorious indeed, but with no more genius or enthusiasm of its own than a violin; that such soul as she had was no more connected with her voice than it was with her eyes. He had been building his house all this while upon the sand—upon diamond-dust, rather. How had she come there?—how had she found means to defy him and art together thus insolently, face to face? But it mattered not how—she was there, and he had lost her.

He could do nothing, however, but sit and listen to her, in the temper of a great artist who hears his favourite violin degraded by base hands into an instrument of torture. His own teaching was being turned against him, and would henceforth, he knew very well, be used to ensure the triumph of the wrong over the right—he had been devoting years of patient zeal to arming the enemy. He had discovered her, trained her, consecrated her for worse than nothing—he had let loose a very Queen of Harpies.

And then, and not till then, he knew that he loved her with all his heart and soul.

It was a terrible discovery; and, but for her rebellion, it would never have been made. The man had never loved a

woman in his life before; and though he was her husband, he had never suspected that it was for love he had married her. He did not even know how to love, or to interpret what he felt, or to distinguish love from anger and scorn. Self-contempt poisoned the discovery. What was he to do? Accept facts—give way to human passion—and throw his purpose to the winds?

Many a far wiser man would have had no doubt about the matter, and would have transmuted the poison into wholesome wine by giving it full heart-room. But then, it is not wise men who consciously devote their lives to anything but themselves. Nobody ever thought Mahomet, or Columbus, or Palissy the potter, a wise man. It was not of his will, but of his nature, that if his heart was ever to come between himself and his art-conscience, then his heart must go, self-hating, to the wall. It was natural he should love her, for she was in effect the work of his own hands. Whatever soul she had she owed to him. As he sat in the theatre and felt her voice thrill through his veins with unknown fire, he dreamed for the first time of a life apart from art, such as a man may lead. Was it not more than enough to have looked for a voice and to have found a whole woman?

Little knew Noëmi what was passing in her husband's mind. But it is not wonderful that his dull frown failed to paralyse her as she half hoped and half feared. No wonder that, if it had any mesmeric influence at all, the newly-discovered feeling that hid itself under the frown inspired her. At last he could bear no longer to sit there, and feel himself falling into slavery. He did not wait for her last note to escape from the house into the open air.

What had happened? How could he tell? Was it he who was the machine after all, to whom she had given a soul, and not, as he had fancied, she who had received one from him? And what sort of soul would he receive from her! There was nothing, he felt, between her becoming all his, and his becoming all hers; and to become all hers meant the sacrifice of all he held worth living for, for the sake of what—so he told himself—was a contemptible passion, though the girl was his wife and the mother of his child. What had he done? He had, for art's sake, consciously sacrificed name, fame,

fortune; he had hidden himself from the world that he might bring a living voice into full harmony with his life's purpose; he had thought nothing of marrying a stray girl from the Ghetto, and cutting himself off from all other ties; and now it was all to end in his—loving her.

And he was her husband, after all. He had no more power over her, he knew, now that she had once escaped into the fatal atmosphere of the unreformed stage. She had never understood him; and now she had placed an impassable gulf between herself and the least chance of comprehending him. His waste of life had been evil enough, but the shadow of love was absolutely terrible. The only course open to him was to break the mockery of a bond that held them together, and to escape from the shadow while there was yet time.

Not only must he fly, but at once; he must not wait for her to return from the opera, flushed with insolent triumph, to conquer him twice over. He could not trust his own strength; love always feels like weakness when it comes with shame. It mattered not what else might happen. So far as she was concerned, she would be left free to lead her own life in her own way—prime *donne* are not in the habit of starving. And, as for himself, all he had to think of was his work and his mission—he would have felt the same if it was a question of saving his soul. What is a man's trumpery soul, he would have asked, compared with his work? Let him do his work; there are plenty of souls to be saved without the need of mine; and if it's lost, what is one more or less among so many?

So much for himself and for her. And that would have been enough, had it not been for a third party to the bargain—the *bambina*.

The pursuit of art certainly becomes a complex business, when nature takes it into her head to interfere.

It will have become clear by this time, that Andrew Gordon, however skilful an artist—and even supposing him to have genius—was nearly as ignorant of nature as if he had never been born. It is true that the Lancashire brooks had told him a few musical secrets; but he had learned just as many from his father's spinning-jennies. In short, he had come to regard the great round world as a gigantic musical-box, and all that

therein is, himself included, as so many stops and keys. Nor did he stand alone in his view. Millions fully believe it to be nothing but a colossal marketplace; thousands treat it as a public-house bar. There are hundreds of worthy men, artists in their way, who can only regard it as a sack of soot, or a heap of dust to be carted off the premises; and thousands upon thousands are persuaded in their inmost minds, that men and women, nay, even the sky and the sea, were made to be written and rhymed about—and for no other purpose in the world. At any rate, Andrew Gordon's craze was no greater than any of these, but it was no less; and when he found himself in his progress suddenly face to face with undisguised, sadly inartistic nature, he felt himself in the strange waters of an unknown sea. Love had revealed itself to him as a terror, as the ruin and destruction of his whole theory of life, and of all that it meant to him. How would he be able to face the desert of laborious life that lay before him, without the daily companionship of the girl who had become an essential part of more than his life—of his life's work—and who had now gone out of it for ever? For it never occurred to him that any course was open to him but escape, at any cost, from all risk of life with her. The man who had been capable of throwing glory from him as if it were a loathsome weed, was just as able to treat the flower of love after the same fashion—more especially when he had mistaken the flower, and when it had turned out to be a full-blown red rose, instead of the expected camellia, that has no perfume of its own.

But still—all this is not the *bambina*.

Once more nature had stopped the way; and by no possibility could art be induced to decide the matter. By no possibility could his work or his purpose be affected, this way or that, by the poor little creature lying cradled at home, while its father and mother were diligently occupied in making themselves miserable. What was he to do with what God had given him, as surely as brains and a heart—though the latter, indeed, had come a little twisted out of the mould? He had never had much time for looking at the child, but he could not help looking at her now. She had her mother's eyes; it was a strange, weird, pathetic sight to see the eyes of Noëmi looking out from the grave face of a baby.

What was he to do with her? It was not so much love as indignant pity that showed him the future of a prima donna's child, and that prima donna—Noëmi. The bambina, and the bambina's eyes, became strangely important things to him, now that he was about to drive the mother out of his life for ever. That Noëmi was already in the whirlpool of all evil, he was assured; she was in other hands than his; and what better was to be expected from a Ghetto Jewess, who spent her life in praying for a shower of diamonds, and had left even her baby untended to gain them? Well, let her go—his consciousness of loving her only deepened his anger and his scorn. But he could not find it in his heart to let her eyes go with her.

"She has all she wants," he thought harshly. "But she shall not kill two lives instead of one. No, nor one even. I am but as I was before I saw her, and was fool enough to mistake a voice for a soul. I have not lost many years; I can begin again. But it was I who have done the mischief; if I let her ruin an innocent life, the sin will be mine; and it will be more than a sin. No—whatever comes, your mother shall have no child of mine."

It was of that evening that John March was thinking as his eyes watched the last crowning chord of the great score—written, at last, from beginning to end. It was strange to feel that it was actually, absolutely done; the great work of twenty-five years, that had absorbed his brain, filled his heart, pervaded his life; for whose sake he had surrendered fame, and thrown away love, and had dreamed and drudged until he had become a mere fossil. And the voice that should by right have sung it—the hateful voice from which he had fled, lest he should love it too well—came back with the last chord to his deaf ears, that would never hear one note even of his own music—well, his ears would never hear the songs he had made for her sung by any meaner voice than Noëmi's.

Had it been worth giving up the whole of a man's life, even his daughter's love, for the sake of music that he would never

hear? He had never thought of such a question before—but—now that it was done?

Well, it was done. The music could never be unmade, nor the years brought back again. Fame might come to him at last with honour; but love he had killed with his own hands. But he would give up twice five-and-twenty years, and twice that, and go through them all twice over in the self-same way, if but once the musician's sense could be restored to him, and he could hear with the ears of his body the triumph of art, and the singing of the whips as the money-changers were scourged from the temple.

But that would never be. Worn out, deaf, unloved and forgotten, he would go out of the world; but he had done his work, and that would live after him. Once more he took up the pen, and wrote at the end of the work—

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped . . . for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. Feci Surdus, Andreas Gordon."

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IS HE POPENJOY ?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XVIII. LORD GEORGE UP IN LONDON.

LORD GEORGE returned to town the day after the lecture, and was not altogether pleased that his wife should have gone to the Disabilities. She thought, indeed, that he did not seem to be in a humour to be pleased with anything. His mind was thoroughly disturbed by the coming of his brother, and perplexed with the idea that something must be done, though he knew not what. And he was pervaded by a feeling that in the present emergency it behoved him to watch his own steps, and more especially those of his wife. An anonymous letter had reached Lady Sarah, signed, "A Friend of the Family," in which it was stated that the Marquis of Brotherton had allied himself to the highest blood that Italy knew, marrying into a family that had been noble before English nobility had existed, whereas his brother had married the granddaughter of a stable-keeper and a tallow-chandler. This letter had, of course, been shown to Lord George; and, though he and his sisters agreed in looking upon it as an emanation from their enemy, the new marchioness, it still gave them to understand that she, if attacked, would be prepared to attack again. And Lord George was open to attack on the side indicated. He was, on the whole, satisfied with his wife. She was ladylike, soft, pretty, well-mannered, and good to him. But her grandfathers had been stable-keepers and tallow-chandlers. Therefore it was specially imperative that she should be kept from injurious influences. Lady

Selina Protest and Aunt Ju, who were both well-born, might take liberties; but not so his wife. "I don't think that was a very nice place to go to, Mary."

"It wasn't nice at all, but it was very funny. I never saw such a vulgar creature as the baroness, throwing herself about, and wiping her face."

"Why should you go and see a vulgar creature throw herself about and wipe her face?"

"Why should anybody do it? One likes to see what is going on, I suppose. The woman's vulgarity could not hurt me, George."

"It could do you no good."

"Lady Selina Protest was there, and I went with Miss Mildmay."

"Two old maids who have gone crazy about Women's Rights because nobody has married them. The whole thing is distasteful to me, and I hope you will not go there again."

"That I certainly shall not, because it is very dull," said Mary.

"I hope, also, that, independently of that, my request would be enough."

"Certainly it would, George; but I don't know why you should be so cross to me."

"I don't think that I have been cross; but I am anxious, specially anxious. There are reasons why I have to be very anxious in regard to you, and why you have to be yourself more particular than others."

"What reasons?" She asked this with a look of bewildered astonishment. He was not prepared to answer the question, and shuffled out of it, muttering some further words as to the peculiar difficulty of their position. Then he kissed her and

left her, telling her that all would be well if she would be careful.

If she would be careful! All would be well if she would be careful! Why should there be need of more care on her part than on that of others? She knew that all this had reference, in some way, to that troublesome lady and troublesome baby who were about to be brought home; but she could not conceive how her conduct could be specially concerned. It was a sorrow to her that her husband should allow himself to be ruffled about the matter at all. It was a sorrow also that her father should do so. As to herself, she had an idea that if Providence chose to make her a marchioness, Providence ought to be allowed to do it without any interference on her part. But it would be a double sorrow if she were told that she mustn't do this and mustn't do that, because there was before her a dim prospect of being seated in a certain high place, which was claimed and occupied by another person. And she was aware, too, that her husband had in very truth scolded her. The ladies at Manor Cross had scolded her before, but he had never done so. She had got away from Manor Cross, and had borne the scolding because the prospect of escape had been before her. But it would be very bad indeed if her husband should take to scold her. Then she thought that if Jack De Baron were married he would never scold his wife.

The dean had not yet gone home, and in her discomfort she had recourse to him. She did not intend to complain of her husband to her father. Had any such idea occurred to her, she would have stamped it out at once, knowing that such a course would be both unloyal and unwise. But her father was so pleasant with her, so easy to be talked to, so easy to be understood, whereas her husband was almost mysterious, at any rate, gloomy and dark. "Papa," she said, "what does George mean by saying that I ought to be more particular than other people?"

"Does he say so?"

"Yes; and he didn't like my going with that old woman to hear the other women. He says that I ought not to do it, though anybody else might."

"I think you misunderstood him."

"No; I didn't, papa."

"Then you had better imagine that he was tired with his journey, or that his stomach was a little out of order. Don't

fret about such things, and whatever you do, make the best of your husband."

"But how am I to know where I may go, and where I mayn't? Am I to ask him everything first?"

"Don't be a child, whatever you do. You will soon find out what pleases him and what doesn't, and, if you manage well, what you do will please him. Whatever his manner may be, he is soft-hearted and affectionate."

"I know that, papa."

"If he says a cross word now and again just let it go by. You should not suppose that words always mean what they seem to mean. I knew a man who used to tell his wife ever so often that he wished she were dead."

"Good heavens, papa!"

"Whenever he said so she always put a little magnesia into his beer, and things went on as comfortably as possible. Never magnify things, even to yourself. I don't suppose Lord George wants magnesia as yet, but you will understand what I mean." She said that she did; but she had not, in truth, quite comprehended the lesson as yet, nor could her father as yet teach it to her in plainer language.

On that same afternoon Lord George called in Berkeley-square and saw Mrs. Houghton. At this time the whole circle of people who were in any way connected with the Germain family, or who, by the circumstances of their lives, were brought within the pale of the Germain influence, were agog with the marriage of the marquis. The newspapers had already announced the probable return of the marquis, and the coming of a new marchioness and a new Lord Popenjoy. Occasion had been taken to give some details of the Germain family, and public allusion had even been made to the marriage of Lord George. These are days in which, should your wife's grandfather have ever been insolvent, some newspaper, in its catering for the public, will think it proper to recall the fact. The dean's parentage had been alluded to, and the late Tallowax will, and the Tallowax property generally. It had also been declared that the Marchesa Luigi—now the present marchioness—had been born in Orsini; and also, in another paper, the other fact (?) that she had been divorced from her late husband. This had already been denied by Mr. Knox, who had received a telegram from Florence ordering such denial to be made.

It may, therefore, be conceived that the Germains were at this moment the subject of much conversation, and it may be understood that Mrs. Houghton, who considered herself to be on very confidential terms with Lord George, should, as they were alone, ask a few questions and express a little sympathy. "How does the dear marchioness like the new house?" she asked.

"It is tolerably comfortable."

"That Price is a darling, Lord George; I've known him ever so long. And, of course, it is the dower-house."

"It was the suddenness that disturbed my mother."

"Of course; and then the whole of it must have gone against the grain with her. You bear it like an angel."

"For myself, I don't know that I have anything to bear."

"The whole thing is so dreadful. There are you and your dear wife—everything just as it ought to be—idolised by your mother, looked up to by the whole country, the very man whom we wish to see the head of such a family."

"Don't talk in that way, Mrs. Houghton."

"I know it is very distant; but still, I do feel near enough related to you all to be justified in being proud, and also to be justified in being ashamed. What will they do about calling upon her?"

"My brother will, of course, come to my mother first. Then Lady Sarah and one of her sisters will go over. After that he will bring his wife to Cross Hall if he pleases."

"I am so glad it is all settled; it is so much better. But you know, Lord George—I must say it to you as I would to my own brother, because my regard for you is the same—I shall never think that that woman is really his wife." Lord George frowned heavily, but did not speak. "And I shall never think that that child is really Lord Popenjoy."

Neither did Lord George, in his heart of hearts, believe that the Italian woman was a true marchioness, or the little child a true Lord Popenjoy; but he had confessed to himself that he had no adequate reason for such disbelief, and had perceived that it would become him to keep his opinion to himself. The dean had been explicit with him, and that very explicitness had seemed to impose silence on himself. To his mother he had not whispered an idea of a suspicion. With his sisters he had been reticent, though he

knew that Lady Sarah, at any rate, had her suspicions. But now an open expression of the accusation from so dear a friend as Mrs. Houghton—from the Adelaide De Baron whom he had so dearly loved—gratified him and almost tempted him into confidence. He had frowned at first, because his own family was to him so august that he could not but frown when anyone ventured to speak of it. Even crowned princes are driven to relax themselves on occasions, and Lord George Germain felt that he would almost like, just for once, to talk about his brothers and sisters as though they were Smiths and Joneses. "It is very hard to know what to think," he said.

Mrs. Houghton at once saw that the field was open to her. She had ventured a good deal, and, knowing the man, had felt the danger of doing so; but she was satisfied now that she might say almost anything. "But one is bound to think, isn't one? Don't you feel that? It is for the whole family that you have to act."

"What is to be done? I can't go and look up evidence."

"But a paid agent can. Think of Mary. Think of Mary's child—if she should have one." As she said this she looked rather anxiously into his face, being desirous of receiving an answer to a question which she did not quite dare to ask.

"Of course there's all that," he said, not answering the question.

"I can only just remember him, though papa knew him so well. But I suppose he has lived abroad till he has ceased to think and feel like an Englishman. Could anyone believe that a Marquis of Brotherton would have married a wife long enough ago to have a son over twelve months old, and never to have said a word about it to his brother or mother? I don't believe it."

"I don't know what to believe," said Lord George.

"And then to write in such a way about the house! Of course I hear it talked of by people who won't speak before you; but you ought to know."

"What do people say?"

"Everybody thinks that there is some fraud. There is old Mrs. Montacute Jones—I don't know anybody who knows everything better than she does—and she was saying that you would be driven by your duty to investigate the matter. 'I

daresay he'd prefer to do nothing,' she said, 'but he must.' I felt that to be so true! Then Mr. Mildmay, who is so very quiet, said that there would be a lawsuit. Papa absolutely laughed at the idea of the boy being Lord Popenjoy, though he was always on good terms with your brother. Mr. Houghton says that nobody in society will give the child the name. Of course he's not very bright, but on matters like that he does know what he's talking about. When I hear all this I feel it a great deal, Lord George."

"I know what a friend you are."

"Indeed I am. I think very often what I might have been, but could not be; and though I am not jealous of the happiness and honours of another, I am anxious for your happiness and your honours." He was sitting near her, on a chair facing the fire, while she was leaning back on the sofa. He went on staring at the hot coals, flattered, in some sort elate, but very disturbed. The old feeling was coming back upon him. She was not as pretty as his wife—but she was, he thought, more attractive, had more to say for herself, was more of a woman. She could pour herself into his heart and understand his feelings, whereas Mary did not sympathise with him at all in this great family trouble. But then Mary was, of course, his wife, and this woman was the wife of another man. He would be the last man in the world—so he would have told himself, could he have spoken to himself on the subject—to bring disgrace on himself and misery on other people by declaring his love to another man's wife. He was the last man to do an injury to the girl whom he had made his own wife! But he liked being with his old love, and felt anxious to say a word to her that should have in it something just a little beyond the ordinary tenderness of friendship. The proper word, however, did not come to him at that moment. In such moments the proper word very often will not come.

"You are not angry with me for saying so?" she asked.

"How can I be angry?"

"I don't think that there can have been such friendship, as there was between you and me, and that it should fade and die away, unless there be some quarrel. You have not quarrelled with me?"

"Quarrelled with you? Never!"

"And you did love me once?" She

at any rate knew how to find the tender words that were required for her purpose.

"Indeed I did."

"It did not last very long; did it, Lord George?"

"It was you that—that—. It was you that stopped it."

"Yes, it was I that stopped it. Perhaps I found it easier to—stop—than I had expected. But it was all for the best. It must have been stopped. What could our life have been? I was telling a friend of mine the other day, a lady, that there are people who cannot afford to wear hearts inside them. If I had jumped at your offer—and there was a moment when I would have done so—"

"Was there?"

"Indeed there was, George." The "George" didn't mean quite as much as it might have meant between others, because they were cousins. "But, if I had, the joint home of us all must have been in Mr. Price's farmhouse."

"It isn't a farmhouse."

"You know what I mean. But I want you to believe that I thought of you quite as much as of myself—more than of myself. I should at any rate have had brilliant hopes before me. I could understand what it would be to be the Marchioness of Brotherton. I could have borne much for years, to think that at some future day I might hang on your arm in London salons as your wife. I had an ambition which now can never be gratified. I, too, can look on this picture and on that. But I had to decide for you as well as for myself, and I did decide that it was not for your welfare, nor for your honour, nor for your happiness, to marry a woman who could not help you in the world." She was now leaning forward and almost touching his arm. "I think sometimes that those most nearly concerned hardly know what a woman may have to endure because she is not selfish."

How could any man stand this? There are words which a man cannot resist from a woman, even though he knows them to be false. Lord George, though he did not quite believe that all these words were sincere, did think that there was a touch of sincerity about them—an opinion which the reader probably will not share with Lord George. "Have you suffered?" he said, putting out his hand to her and taking hers.

"Suffered!" she exclaimed, drawing away her hand, and sitting bolt upright

and shaking her head. "Do you think that I am a fool, not to know! Do you suppose that I am blind and deaf? When I said that I was one of those who could not afford to wear a heart, did you imagine that I had been able to get rid of the article? No, it is here still," and she put her hand on her side. "It is here still, and very troublesome I find it. I suppose the time will come when it will die away. They say that every plant will fade if it be shut in from the light, and never opened to the rains of heaven."

"Alas! alas!" he said. "I did not know that you would feel like that."

"Of course I feel. I have had something to do with my life, and I have done this with it! Two men have honoured me with their choice, and out of the two I have chosen—Mr. Houghton. I comfort myself by telling myself that I did right;—and I did do right. But the comfort is not very comforting." Still he sat looking at the fire. He knew that it was open to him to get up and swear to her that she still had his heart. She could not be angry with him, as she had said as much to himself. And he almost believed at the moment that it was so. He was quite alive to the attraction of the wickedness, though, having a conscience, he was aware that the wickedness should, if possible, be eschewed. "I did not mean to say all this," she exclaimed at last, sobbing.

"Adelaide!" he said.

"Do you love me? You may love me without anything wrong."

"Indeed I do." Then there was an embrace, and after that he hurried away, almost without another word.

CHAPTER XIX. RATHER "BOISTEROUS."

"AFTER all, he's very dreary!" It was this that Adelaide Houghton spoke to herself, as soon as Lord George had left her. No doubt the whole work of the interview had fallen on to her shoulders. He had at last been talked into saying that he loved her, and had then run away, frightened by the unusual importance and tragic signification of his own words. "After all, he's very dreary."

Mrs. Houghton wanted excitement. She probably did like Lord George as well as she liked anyone. Undoubtedly she would have married him, had he been able to maintain her as she liked to be maintained; but, as he had been unable, she had taken Mr. Houghton without a notion

on her part of making even an attempt to love him. When she said that she could not afford to wear a heart—and she had said so to various friends and acquaintances—she did entertain an idea that circumstances had used her cruelly, that she had absolutely been forced to marry a stupid old man, and that therefore some little freedom was due to her as a compensation. Lord George was Lord George, and might possibly some day be a marquis. He was, at any rate, a handsome man, and he had owned allegiance to her, before he had transferred his homage to that rich little chit Mary Lovelace. She was incapable of much passion, but she did feel that she owed it to herself to have some revenge on Mary Lovelace. The game, as it stood, had charms sufficient to induce her to go on with it; and yet, after all, he was dreary.

Such was the lady's feeling when she was left alone; but Lord George went away from the meeting almost overcome by the excitement of the occasion. To him the matter was of such stirring moment that he could not go home, could not even go to his club. He was so moved by his various feelings, that he could only walk by himself and consider things. To her that final embrace had meant very little. What did it signify? He had taken her in his arms and kissed her forehead. It might have been her lips had he so pleased. But to him it had seemed to mean very much indeed. There was a luxury in it which almost intoxicated him, and a horror in it which almost quelled him. That she should so love him, as to be actually subdued by her love, could not but charm him. He had none of that strength which arms a man against flatterers—none of that experience which strengthens a man against female cajolery. It was to him very serious, and very solemn. There might, perhaps, have been exaggeration in her mode of describing her feelings, but there could be no doubt in this, that he had held her in his arms, and that she was another man's wife.

The wickedness of the thing was more wicked to him than the charm of it was charming. It was dreadful to him to think that he had done a thing of which he would have to be ashamed, if the knowledge of it were brought to his wife's ears. That he should have to own himself to have been wrong to her would tear him to pieces. That he should lord it over her as a real husband was necessary to his happiness, and how can a man be a real

lord over a woman when he has had to confess his fault to her, and to beg her to forgive him? A wife's position with her husband may be almost improved by such asking for pardon. It will enhance his tenderness. But the man is so lowered, that neither of them can ever forget the degradation. And, though it might never come to that, though this terrible passion might be concealed from her, still it was a grievance to him and a disgrace that he should have anything to conceal. It was a stain in his own eyes on his own nobility, a slur upon his escutcheon, a taint in his honesty, and then the sin of it—the sin of it! To him it already sat heavy on his conscience. While with her there was hardly left a remembrance of the kiss which he had imprinted on her brow, his lips were still burning with the fever. Should he make up his mind, now at once, that he would never, never see her again? Should he resolve that he would write to her a moving tragic letter—not a love-letter—in which he would tell her that there must be a gulf between them, over which neither must pass till age should have tamed their passions. As he walked across the Park he meditated what would be the fitting words for such a letter, and almost determined that it should be written. Did he not owe his first duty to his wife, and was he not bound for her sake to take such a step? Then, as he wandered alone in Kensington-gardens—for it had taken him many steps, and occupied much time to think of it all—there came upon him an idea that perhaps the lady would not receive the letter in the proper spirit. Some idea occurred to him of the ridicule which would befall him, should the lady at last tell him that he had really exaggerated matters. And then the letter might be shown to others. He did love the lady. With grief and shame and a stricken conscience he owned to himself that he loved her. But he could not quite trust her. And so, as he walked down towards the Albert Memorial, he made up his mind that he would not write the letter. But he also made up his mind—he thought that he made up his mind—that he would go no more alone to Berkeley-square.

As he walked on he suddenly came upon his wife walking with Captain De Baron, and he was immediately struck with the idea that his wife ought not to be walking in Kensington-gardens with Captain De Baron. The idea was so strong, as altogether to expel from his mind for the

moment all remembrance of Mrs. Houghton. He had been unhappy before because he was conscious that he was ill-treating his wife, but now he was almost more disturbed because it seemed to him to be possible that his wife was ill-treating him. He had left her but a few minutes ago—he thought of it now as being but a few minutes since—telling her with almost his last word that she was specially bound, more bound than other women, to mind her own conduct, and here she was walking in Kensington-gardens with a man whom all the world called Jack De Baron. As he approached them his brow became clouded, and she could see that it was so. She could not but fear that her companion would see it also. Lord George was thinking how to address them, and had already determined on tucking his wife under his own arm and carrying her off, before he saw that a very little way behind them the dean was walking with—Adelaide Houghton herself. Though he had been more than an hour wandering about the Park, he could not understand that the lady whom he had left in her own house so recently, in apparently so great a state of agitation, should be there also, in her best bonnet and quite calm. He had no words immediately at command, but she was as voluble as ever. "Doesn't this seem odd?" she said. "Why, it is not ten minutes since you left me in Berkeley-square. I wonder what made you come here?"

"What made you come?"

"Jack brought me here. If it were not for Jack I should never walk or ride or do anything, except sit in a stupid carriage. And just at the gate of the gardens we met the dean and Lady George."

This was very simple and straightforward. There could be no doubt of the truth of it all. Lady George had come out with her father, and nothing could be more as it ought to be. As to "Jack" and the lady he did not, at any rate as yet, feel himself justified in being angry at that arrangement. But nevertheless he was disturbed. His wife had been laughing when he first saw her, and Jack had been talking, and they had seemed to be very happy together. The dean no doubt was there; but still the fact remained that Jack had been laughing and talking with his wife. He almost doubted whether his wife ought under any circumstances to laugh in Kensington-gardens. And then the dean was so indiscreet! He, Lord George, could

not of course forbid his wife to walk with her father; but the dean had no idea that any real looking after was necessary for anybody. He at once gave his arm to his wife, but in two minutes she had dropped it. They were on the steps of the Albert Memorial, and it was perhaps natural that she should do so. But he hovered close to her as they were looking at the figures, and was uneasy. "I think it's the prettiest thing in London," said the dean, "one of the prettiest things in the world."

"Don't you find it very cold?" said Lord George, who did not at the present moment care very much for the fine arts.

"We have been walking quick," said Mrs. Houghton, "and have enjoyed it." The dean with the two others had now passed round one of the corners. "I wonder," she went on, "I do wonder how it has come to pass that we should be brought together again so soon!"

"We both happened to come the same way," said Lord George, who was still thinking of his wife.

"Yes; that must have been it. Though is it not a strange coincidence? My mind had been so flurried that I was glad to get out into the fresh air. When shall I see you again?" He couldn't bring himself to say never. There would have been a mock-tragic element about the single word which even he felt. And yet, here on the steps of the monument, there was hardly an opportunity for him to explain at length the propriety of their both agreeing to be severed. "You wish to see me—don't you?" she asked.

"I hardly know what to say."

"But you love me!" She was now close to him, and there was no one else near enough to interfere. She was pressing close up to him, and he was sadly ashamed of himself. And yet he did love her. He thought that she had never looked so well as at the present moment. "Say that you love me," she said, stamping her foot almost imperiously.

"You know I do, but——"

"But what?"

"I had better come to you again and tell you all." The words were no sooner out of his mouth, than he remembered that he had resolved that he would never go to her again. But yet, after what had passed, something must be done. He had also made up his mind that he wouldn't write. He had quite made up his mind about that. The words that are written remain. "It

would perhaps be better that he should go to her and tell her everything.

"Of course you will come again," she said. "What is it ails you? You are unhappy because she is here with my cousin Jack?" It was intolerable to him that anyone should suspect him of jealousy. "Jack has a way of getting intimate with people, but it means nothing." It was dreadful to him that an allusion should be made to the possibility of anybody "meaning anything" with his wife.

Just at this moment Jack's voice was heard coming back round the corner, and also the daughter of the dean. Captain De Baron had been describing the persons represented on the base of the monument, and had done so after some fashion of his own that had infinitely amused not only Lady George but her father also. "You ought to be appointed guide to the memorial," said the dean.

"If Lady George will give me a testimonial, no doubt I might get it, dean," said Jack.

"I don't think you know anything about any of them," said Lady George. "I'm sure you've told me wrong about two. You're the last man in the world that ought to be a guide to anything."

"Will you come and be guide, and I'll just sweep the steps?"

Lord George heard the last words, and allowed himself to be annoyed at them, though he felt them to be innocent. He knew that his wife was having a game of pleasant play, like a child with a pleasant playfellow. But then he was not satisfied that his wife should play like a child, and certainly not with such a playfellow. He doubted whether his wife ought to allow playful intimacy from any man. Marriage was to him a very serious thing. Was he not prepared to give up a real passion, because he had made this other woman his wife? In thinking over all this his mind was not very logical, but he did feel that he was justified in exacting particularly strict conduct from her, because he was going to make Mrs. Houghton understand that they two, though they loved each other, must part. If he could sacrifice so much for his wife, surely she might sacrifice something for him.

They returned altogether to Hyde-park-corner, and then they separated. Jack went away towards Berkeley-square with his cousin; the dean got himself taken in a cab to his club; and Lord George walked his wife down Constitution-hill

towards their own home. He felt it to be necessary that he should say something to his wife; but, at the same time, was specially anxious that he should give her no cause to suspect him of jealousy. Nor was he jealous, in the ordinary sense of the word. He did not suppose for a moment that his wife was in love with Jack De Baron, or Jack with his wife. But he did think that, whereas she had very little to say to her own husband, she had a great deal to say to Jack. And he was sensible, also, of a certain unbecomingness in such amusement on her part. She had to struggle upwards, so as to be able to sustain properly the position and dignity of Lady George Germain, and the possible dignity of the Marchioness of Brotherton. She ought not to want playfellows. If she would really have learned the names of all those artists on the base of the memorial, as she might so easily have done, there would have been something in it. A lady ought to know, at any rate, the names of such men. But she had allowed this Jack to make a joke of it all, and had rather liked the joke. And the dean had laughed loud, more like the son of a stable-keeper than a dean. Lord George was almost more angry with the dean than with his wife. The dean, when at Brotherton, did maintain a certain amount of dignity; but here up in London, he seemed to be intent only on "having a good time," like some schoolboy out on a holiday.

"Were you not a little loud when you were on the steps of the memorial?" he said.

"I hope not, George; not too loud."

"A lady should never be in the least loud, nor, for the matter of that, would a gentleman either if he knew what he was about."

She walked on a little way, leaning on his arm in silence, considering whether he meant anything by what he was saying, and how much he meant. She felt almost sure that he did mean something disagreeable, and that he was scolding her. "I don't quite know what you mean by loud, George. We were talking, and of course wanted to make each other hear. I believe, with some people, loud means—vulgar. I hope you didn't mean that."

He certainly would not tell his wife that she was vulgar. "There is," he said, "a manner of talking which leads people on to—to—being boisterous."

"Boisterous, George? Was I boisterous?"

"I think your father was a little."

She felt herself blush beneath her veil as she answered. "Of course, if you tell me anything about myself, I will endeavour to do as you tell me; but, as for papa, I am sure he knows how to behave himself. I don't think he ought to be found fault with because he likes to amuse himself."

"And that Captain De Baron was very loud," said Lord George, conscious that, though his ground might be weak in reference to the dean, he could say what he pleased about Jack De Baron.

"Young men do laugh and talk, don't they, George?"

"What they do in their barracks, or when they are together, is nothing to you or me. What such a one may do when he is in company with my wife is very much to me, and ought to be very much to you."

"George," she said, again pausing for a moment, "do you mean to tell me that I have misbehaved myself? Because, if so, speak it out at once."

"My dear, that is a foolish question to ask. I have said nothing about misbehaviour, and you ought, at any rate, to wait till I have done so. I should be very sorry to use such a word, and do not think that I shall ever have occasion. But surely you will admit that there may be practices, and manners, and customs on which I am at liberty to speak to you. I am older than you."

"Husbands, of course, are older than their wives, but wives generally know what they are about quite as well as their husbands."

"Mary, that isn't the proper way to take what I say. You have a very peculiar place to fill in the world, a place for which your early life could not give you the very fittest training."

"Then why did you put me there?"

"Because of my love, and also because I had no doubt whatever as to your becoming fit. There is a levity which is often pretty and becoming in a girl, in which a married woman in some ranks of life may, perhaps, innocently indulge, but which is not appropriate to higher positions."

"This is all because I laughed when Captain De Baron mispronounced the men's names. I don't know anything peculiar in my position. One would suppose that I was going to be made a sort of female bishop, or to sit all my life as a chairwoman, like that Miss Mildmay. Of

course I laugh when things are said that make me laugh. And as for Captain De Baron, I think he is very nice. Papa likes him, and he is always at the Houghtons, and I cannot agree that he was loud and vulgar, or boisterous, because he made a few innocent jokes in Kensington-gardens."

He perceived now, for the first time since he had known her, that she had a temper of her own, which he might find some difficulty in controlling. She had endured gently enough his first allusions to herself, but had risen up in wrath against him from the moment in which he had spoken disparagingly of her father. At the moment he had nothing further to say. He had used what eloquence there was in him, what words he had collected together, and then walked home in silence. But his mind was full of the matter; and though he made no further allusion on that day, or for some subsequent days either, to this conversation or to his wife's conduct in the Park, he had it always in his mind. He must be the master, and, in order that he might be master, the dean must be as little as possible in the house. And that intimacy with Jack De Baron must be crushed, if only that she might be taught that he intended to be master.

Two or three days passed by, and during those two or three days he did not go to Berkeley-square.

MISTRESS AND MAID.

THERE is a family establishment, with which I happen to be acquainted, whose locale is a south-western suburb of London, and the completeness and comfort of whose appointments nothing could surpass, that is manned and womaned throughout by foreign servants. An exception must be made in the case of the cook, who is an Irishwoman, though, even she, on her mother's side, is of French extraction. A single indoor man-servant is kept, who is an Italian, and five women-servants in addition to the above-named cook, who are Swiss or German. There exists in the British breast a not unintelligible and patriotic prejudice against households composed on such principles of mixed nationality as this, and it may at once be conceded that the substitution of aliens for natives in the British kitchen is often an affectation which is attended by no economical advantages and no scientific superiority. In the particular instance that now occurs to me, none of

these defects are noticeable. The way of life is English, the fare spread on the hospitable board is English; the warmth, brightness, and ease which pervades the whole, are English above all things. Seldom English, however, I am bound to say, except at the dinner-table, and then on company occasions, is the language heard within the house. One of the objects of its master and mistress in securing such an array of Continental domestics, was educational. In this family small children abound, and each small child can prattle correctly in French and German, as well as in English. The educational aspect of the plan may be put out of sight; it is the economical which chiefly concerns us. The present régime has been in operation seven years. Before it was introduced, my friends kept half the number of domestics they now have. The cost of their establishment was then greater, certainly by one-third, than it now is. Here are the facts, and any lady or gentleman who chooses may make the experiment for herself or himself. I will not guarantee its success, and I am quite certain that it has risks and dangers, which, in this special case known to me, have not made themselves felt. Two circumstances I may mention for the benefit of those who may feel disposed to essay the arrangement. In the first place, foreign domestics can only be managed properly by, and, as a consequence, will only give their best and most loyal service to, those who have divested themselves of many of their most tenacious modes of insular thought, and have themselves lived much abroad. In the second place, if the Continental servant of the best and most trustworthy kind be desired, it is not to the Continental market as it exists in England that we must go. There are in London, and doubtless in other great cities, agencies where foreign menials, from major-domo down to kitchen-maid, can be procured. Distrust them one and all. They have already become viciously naturalised; they have studied and faithfully reproduced the customs and the ideas of the English domestic; they have lost their thrift, their simplicity, their brightness. At the end of the year, the housemaid whom you have imported direct from Brittany will bring you a tidy little sum which she has saved out of her wages, and ask you to transmit it direct to France for investment in the funds, or for the relief of her family. The contact with English servantgalism which Phyllis of foreign

origin, hired at such agencies as have been mentioned, have experienced; will have caused them to contract the thoroughly English habit of squandering their wages on finery, and will leave them penniless long before the year is out.

Though most English matrons would only adopt, with considerable reluctance, such an expedient as that whose operation has just been sketched, it is clear that "something must be done." Whither have all the good servants gone? How is it possible to put up with the generation which has succeeded them? What will the next generation be like? These are the household questions of the day, which have already received a variety of answers, and have elicited not a few suggestions. When the Prince of Wales returned to England after his visit to India, he brought with him one or two dusky attendants, and the proposal was at once made that we should recruit our menial army from the teeming orient. It was of course impracticable, and it fell through as completely as, for practical purposes, the desperate device of lady and gentleman helps may be considered to have done. The great servant problem has still to be solved, and whether the solution is to be domestic or foreign; whether Alphonse, and Giovanni, and Fritz, and Thérèse, are to take the place of John, William, Jane, and Elizabeth, as even on our own shores the Continental *ouvrier* threatens to displace the British workman; or whether our own home-bred helps—save the mark!—will change their estimate of the duties of their position, who shall say?

Let it be admitted unreservedly that, as there is a case for the mistresses, so there is a case for the servants. The latter plea is universally conceded by those who have studied the most pressing domestic difficulty of the age, and has been pushed to a fanciful and extravagant length by some able authorities on the matter. A few years ago, a murder of a very atrocious character was committed by a cook in a kitchen in Park-lane. The victim was the mistress of the establishment, and Mr. Charles Reade improved the occasion in the manner characteristic of him, by a homily on the grievances of the race of domestics, and by the suggestion that, if the mistress had not transgressed her province, had not invaded quite unjustifiably the cook's sanctum, she would not have met with a violent and premature death. Servants have found another very clever and accomplished apologist in

Mrs. Lynn Linton, who, amongst other observations, protests that she sees no reason why, if Betsey Jane does her work, and earns her honest wage, she should not dress in any fashion she chooses, spend her holidays where and as she likes, and if she has a taste that way, occupy her elegant leisure with the painting of velvet, or the playing of operatic airs. Quite so. All this is completely an affair to be settled between mistress and maid. But the real complaint is, that Mrs. Linton's hypothesis, which is essential for the success of her argument, is unhappily not fulfilled. "If Betsey Jane does her work"—and her work, in the sense in which she stipulates to do it, is left undone. A mistress engages a servant; at the time the engagement is made, she specifies in the clearest way what the duties of the place are. The maid contracts to perform them, and does not. She surreptitiously evades, or insolently repudiates them. The dusting of a particular chair or sofa was not in the bond. As a matter of fact, it was; but Betsey Jane brazens out the denial, and ends with sulkily consenting to do that for which she is paid. All this time she has been having her monthly holiday, her Sundays out, her afternoons and evenings in the week. Without provocation of any kind she has chosen to see, in the mistress whom she engages to serve, her natural enemy—a born foe and tyrant, whom she is justified in duping on every possible occasion—from whom it is her duty to herself to get as much, and to whom to give as little as circumstances admit.

Who does not know that human compound of self-sufficiency, conceit, ignorance, thanklessness, thoughtlessness, selfishness, which constitutes so many a modern servant? The sins of dishonesty and drunkenness, though far from uncommon, may be excluded from the catalogue. These are vices not specially limited to servants; they do not, logically speaking, make up the differentia of the class, in the sense in which the other defects certainly do. Ignorance in a servant is thoroughly pardonable, and can be cured by instruction. Mistresses do not complain that servants do not know, but that they will not be taught. "I know my work," is the stereotyped reply to any mention or remonstrance; but that is exactly what she does not know, or what she will not honestly take in hand. Housemaids and parlour-maids, who have no other thought than how they can spare themselves exertion,

demand and receive eighteen pounds a year; the plainest of plain cooks demand and receive twenty pounds or more, and probably dispose of thrice that sum in wanton waste and perquisites. Language can scarcely exaggerate the amount of petty misery, which the modern servant à la mode is capable of causing to master and mistress. The perpetual forgetfulness, the crass, stolid indifference to the comfort of any human being except herself, the endless neglect of small commands, the semipiternal necessity of personal reminder and supervision—these are sources of unintermitting irritation, in comparison with which an occasional outburst of intoxication would be a relief, and the periodic perpetration of a deliberate fraud a pardonable iniquity. What treatment is to be applied in such cases as these? Will kindness answer? But you try kindness, and even generosity. You make Abigail and Susan presents of clothes; you try to obtain their confidence; you show that you would be friends with them; you accede to their request for a day or an evening out, at a moment when it happens to be really inconvenient; if they have any ailment you see that they are as carefully tended, as if they were of your own kith and kin. In what a lamentably small percentage of cases does this policy prove successful! If you are ill yourself, will the ordinary servant forego a holiday to further your recovery? Will she rise from her seat a moment sooner than suits her, or move her limbs quicker if your bell rings? Will she, in consideration of the unmistakable evidence which you have given of a wish to consult her comfort and pleasure, forego the chance of a gossip with her young man on the area-steps, because you have requested her to discontinue the usage? Happy indeed are those mistresses who can succeed in establishing any sentiment of moral and personal reciprocity between themselves and their servants.

It is the apparent hopelessness of the appeal to good feeling and honour, which is the worst sign with the servants of the day. The grosser phases of their selfishness, though bad enough, are comparatively venial faults. The gluttony that goes on below stairs, the unbroken round of meals, these several editions of breakfast, lunch, early dinner, late dinner, tea, and supper, the manner in which anything that can violently be dragged into the category of broken meats disappears from your table never to

appear again—most of this might be endured, if there were solid compensation in the way of positive merit. The fastidiousness of the modern servant is as monstrous as her gluttony. What is good enough for the table of the master, will not answer the sybaritic requirements of the maid. Servants will only eat particular joints; they must have a cheese such as they approve; they would as soon touch any meat save of prime native growth as they would be satisfied with “skilly.” Yet one knows perfectly well that, should the opportunities of service fail, these misguided persons would be fain to fill themselves with the husks which formed the prodigal son’s best fare.

Such roughly is the case for the mistresses. It remains to be seen what explanation can be found for the facts of the case, and what, on the other hand, can be described as the case for the servants.

There are certain definite phenomena, apart from what is spoken of as the general democratic tendency of the age, which may account for a good deal of the independence of our dependents. If a mistress attempts to engage a servant at the Soho Bazaar, she will find that, before she has had the opportunity of putting many questions to the young person, the young person has subjected her to a very exhaustive sort of catechetical lecture. It is as likely as not—indeed, it is the more likely of the two—that it will be the hired and not the hirer who will intimate the abrupt conclusion of negotiations. Some of the lady’s replies are not satisfactory. The quarter of the town does not suit the young person. The houses in the street or square are too small or too big. There is not a footman kept, but only a page-boy, or else there is no page-boy under the footman. The hours are not in accordance with her views; the holidays are insufficient. If the wages might be accepted, everything is not “found,” or the opportunity of perquisites is not satisfactory. The young person is very sorry, but, “I must decline.” All mistresses may not be aware that there exists the machinery for making severe enquiries into their own characters, for the benefit of intending servants, on a most extensive scale throughout the country. In London there is a central office, in which the names of all the actual or potential masters and mistresses of the United Kingdom are registered. A payment of an annual fee of fifteen shillings to this institution gives

every servant the right and the power to ascertain what households are or are not desirable; the information being conveyed by correspondents regularly receiving the pay of the institution, and residents in different parts of London or of the country, as the case may be. There is also an association, which titularly identifies itself with the great object of national reform, and which for three years past has been circulating a document throughout the kitchens of the empire, appealing to the servants to resist the oppression of their masters. In connection with this association there is a fund established, a yearly payment of ten shillings to which entitles servants who are out of place to a small allowance. There are two other circumstances at this point to be considered. In the present day, servants have, as a matter of fact, outlets for employment and means of livelihood which have only recently come into existence. There is the sewing-machine, for instance, and in a great city like London, domestic maid-servants know that they can earn enough to support themselves by these instruments, and that the occupation will give them their evenings free. Again, there are the chances of emigration, and in the literature which servant-girls read, as well as in the weekly newspapers which they patronise, the golden possibilities of emigration are systematically overcoloured. No doubt it is in many cases with these poor creatures the pride that goes before a fall, and that a terrible fall. But it is quite certain that a belief in luck, a confidence that a happy chance will somehow or other present itself, does in the last place account for some of the airs and extravagances of servantgalism.

But the blame does not end here. Nothing is more certain than that, if there were no bad mistresses, no domestic mismanagement, there would be none of those faults which are justly complained of in the servants of the period. The senseless extravagance and the wanton waste which are permitted to exist in the households of the great, and, above all, in those of the nouveaux riches, is accountable for a great deal of the deterioration of our domestics. There is as much vanity, pretence, and snobbishness of a kind among servants, as among their masters and mistresses. As the cook looks down upon the maid of all work, so does the parlour-maid, who is under a butler, on a housemaid in a family in which no man-servant is kept. To have

had experience in and have lived with the titled or untitled aristocracy, whether of birth or wealth, where a whole retinue of pampered, plush-clad, puffy satellites is kept, where the servants'-hall is liberty-hall, where money is spent merely because there is money to spend, and because the spending of it is the distinctive mark of superior caste. Everyone who has had a practical acquaintance with servants knows how contagious is the force of good or bad example, and a servant who comes from one of those big, mismanaged establishments, where corruption, and venality, wicked and objectless waste prevail, is enough to ruin her fellow-servants in a more modestly-conducted ménage. This sort of movement is perpetually going on, and it is no exaggeration to say that half the servants who are instrumental in spreading discomfort through many a middle-class household, have been spoiled by the airs which they have seen paraded before them. Servants are not born bad, more than any other of Her Majesty's subjects. Good servants in all ranks of life are occasionally made bad servants by bad mistresses—just as a succession of bad riders will ruin a good horse, or a penman who holds his fingers awry will spoil a good pen. For half the servantgalism, which the mistresses allege as a grievance, the responsibility rests with the mistresses themselves. Faults of temper on the lady's part are bad enough, and an irritable and nagging housewife cannot reasonably expect loyal service from those whom she employs. But the fruitful origin of unsatisfactory servants, of which I now speak, is not all temper, but a vicious and debasing system of household management.

There are other matters in which the mistresses are by no means to be acquitted, and with reference to which they might do a great deal towards the protection of themselves and of each other, which they at present leave undone. In the first place, mistresses are not sufficiently careful in enquiring after the character of the servants whom they engage, nor, when asked for the characters of servants leaving them, are they as scrupulous as they ought to be in their replies. A lady who takes a written character, who does not at any cost to her convenience, even at any expense, personally investigate the antecedents of the maid, invites deception, and deserves to be ill-served. From what has been said above—and the writer has said nothing of which he is not cogni-

sant from practical experience—it may be seen that the servants are invited to organise themselves into a society against the masters and mistresses; it remains for mistresses to take what preventive steps they can; and these they might certainly take if they would be frank with each other, and would do justice to themselves. The great servant grievance is a real grievance, but its whose proportions might be considerably reduced, if mistresses did all which lies in their power to do for its remedy.

A JAPANESE LOVE-SONG.

Yes, 'tis Autumn, dearest, see
Cold, rough signs on every side;
Listen to the fluttering leaf,
Borne before the tempest tide.
Listen to the mournful song,
Wafted from the pine-trees tall;
Listen to the torrent's voice,
Loud resounding over all.

It was in the gladsome Spring,
When we met and told our love;
Nature sang in ecstasy,
The skies were bright and blue above.
Then we hoped, and had no thought,
That darksome days could ever be;
The golden hours flitted by
In mirth and loving revelry.

Then Summer came—we lovers still
Trifled the long sweet hours away;
In scented woods, and deep, dark shades
With jest and smile, and old-world lay.
Or, on the cool, broad river's wave,
Floating along, we wove our dream,
Nor thought of those who toiled for gain
In the great city's busy stream.

'Tis Autumn now, and Winter soon
Will change the fair world's smiling face;
A year, alas! will then have flown,
To us a fleeting moment's space.
Oh, ere the Spring come back again,
In all her radiance divine,
May fortune smile upon our love,
And let me call thee, dearest, mine!

THE MAISON BLANCHE.

"AHA, la Maison Blanche!" cried Von Hanmer, that stout Bavarian ritter, a visitor to my studio one hot summer's day. He was turning over the leaves of a sketch-book filled with odd bits picked up lately in Normandy, and had come upon the sketch of a curious old house overlooking the Seine. A house that was a connecting link between the mediæval fortalice and the modern dwelling; high-grated windows, strong portals and flanking projections, pierced with loopholes—an aspect gaunt yet picturesque. "La Maison Blanche—well I recall the spot, for there I met with an ever-to-be-remembered adventure, that even yet brings back a shudder. A

shudder would be pleasant, you say, this broiling weather; well, you shall have it, if I have any skill to tell the story." Von Hanmer twisted his long flaxen moustache and began:

It was Christmastide, 1870. I was then a lieutenant of cavalry, my regiment attached to the corps of General von Bentheim, occupying Rouen and part of Normandy. We were on outpost duty, and dreary enough we found it. The weather was execrable; it snowed, blew, rained, thawed, and froze, all at once, or at insignificant intervals; we had every variety of discomfort in the twenty-four hours. The country about was infested by wandering bands of *francs-tireurs*, who kept us always on the alert. These men had no regard for the established usages of warfare, they would pick off sentries, wantonly attack outposts, lay cunning ambushes for detached parties—ah, how we hated them! Yes, from their standpoint, no doubt these were patriots and heroes, but in our regards they were so many brigands to be dealt with as such. If we were fired at from a house, the house was burnt, and any men found in it were shot. Ach himmel, what would you have? we don't make war with violet powder and pop-guns.

One winter's afternoon, I was ordered all of a sudden to take a detachment of my dragoons, and accompany a certain army purveyor to bring in a quantity of hay, reported to be lying at a farm a mile or so beyond our lines. A hateful kind of duty, for which I was singled out on account of my knowing well the language of the country. I rode out grumbling to myself, but was a little pacified on learning that the duty would be soon over, the hay being all ready packed and the farmer quite willing to be requisitioned, for our acknowledgments were sure to be honoured, while those of his countrymen were more doubtful; only he required for his own safety that a certain constraint should be put upon him.

Arrived at the farm, we found the hay packed in readiness in two immense carts. You remember the huge Norman hay-carts, with shafts like the masts of a big ship, and a load above that seems to touch the clouds, but so nicely balanced as almost to stand alone on the two enormous wheels. An ordinary waggon I could have managed well enough by dismounting half-a-dozen men, and hitching on their horses by rope traces; but these carts

were a more serious affair, they required a steady shaft-horse, for a hitch or a prance at the wrong place, and heaven knows which end will be uppermost. None of our troop horses could be trusted, the farmer himself had not one. Presently it was whispered in my ear that a certain farmer who lived at the "Maison Blanche," not half a mile below, was the happy possessor of two excellent cart-horses. There was no time to lose, dusk was coming on, and the country was not particularly safe for us Germans. I took at once four men, and rode down to the place indicated.

The track was steep and rugged, but it brought us safely out just below the Maison Blanche. I well remember the weird solemn look of the place, as it stood out against the sullen glow in the evening sky, a kind of unearthly gloom and shadow upon it. I shivered involuntarily as we rode through the gateway, and sombre twilight fell upon us suddenly. The clatter of our entrance brought out the farmer and his daughter. A fine-looking girl she was, with a clear-cut, rather classic profile—just the kind of girl you would have fancied capable of self-sacrifice and devotion. She looked scared enough now, white, and all of a tremble, replying to my questions; the rough, sullen-looking man her father, pretending not to understand my French. They had no horses here, no, not one; monsieur might search for himself everywhere, the stables were open to him, and the whole house! She ran on volubly, a kind of forced smile on her face, her eyes full of anxiety and terror.

The stables were empty, sure enough; I had been misinformed, it seemed. With a strange sense of relief at getting clear of the Maison Blanche I gave my bridle-rein a shake, when my horse, after arching his neck and sniffing the air, began to neigh lustily. And from the very bowels of the earth, as it seemed, I heard a reply faint and muffled, and yet strangely near, as if from the ground beneath our feet.

"It is the echo," cried Augustine, in answer to my look of awakened suspicion. "Ah yes, the echo. Monsieur admires it, no doubt, coming from over the river; you should hear it when the huntsman of Monsieur——"

"Ach Gott, it is no echo that; you have hidden your horses somewhere. Come, you have ample cellars under here, no doubt. Show them to me."

Her face was like death, only her eyes

blazing forth full of anguish; but she answered volubly still. Cellars? They had no cellars. What should a poor farmer want with cellars? If there had ever been such in times long ago, they must have been blocked up ages since.

At a sign a couple of men dismounted, and began to search the house for the entrance to the cellars. In a few minutes they returned to report that they could discover no such opening. In the meantime I had employed my eyes. At the side of the house next to me was a slender square shaft flanking it, and pierced for musketry. Such a flanking tower would hardly have existed unless there had been an entrance to protect; but there was no sign of one. But I could not see the whole wall for a pile of faggots piled up against the lower end.

"Clear away that heap of sticks!" The men set to work with a will. Before half the wood had been removed there appeared the lintel of a half-sunken doorway. In a trice the rest of the stack had disappeared, and an ancient stone portal was brought to light, close by a massive grated door strongly bound with iron. A well-directed blow from a big stone knocked the rickety lock to pieces, and I entered.

It was a hall, low but well-proportioned, partly hewn out of the chalk rock, roofed with huge transverse beams of solid oak blackened with age. Huge hogsheads, twenty or thirty, stood about on end, and one or two were mounted on good stone rests. In one corner was an extemporised stable, where two sleek mares of a lovely mottled gray were munching their provender. They were favourites, evidently, and well cared for; hence, no doubt, the pains taken to conceal them. Gaily I marched off the horses, and turned to reassure the fair Augustine. I started to find her just behind me. No longer in grief and distress, but with anger and defiance sparkling in her eyes, and she chanted out in loud clear voice, that had the ring of a trumpet-call in it: "*Levez-vous, soldats! soldats, levez-vous! Il n'y a que cinq dans la maison.*"

Instantly the cider hogsheads were turned over with a loud crash, and some five-and-twenty wild, fierce-looking men confronted me, rags of old uniforms and tatters of all kinds hanging about them; but each with a brilliantly-polished chassepot in his hands.

The leader of the band, a tall, comely youth, sprang at me, making a lunge with

his bayonet. I fired my pistol in his face, then a volley flashed forth from the cellar, and sudden darkness came crushing in upon me.

I came to life in terrible pain and torture, surrounded by perfect darkness, and for a long while I hardly knew whether the torments I endured were of this world or of some other, and I had the dreadful feeling that this agony would go on for ever. Ages seemed to pass—in reality, I suppose, only a few hours—and then a gleam of blessed daylight gleamed in through a loophole and fell upon a crucifix that was affixed to the wall in the farther corner. Daylight, feeble though it was, brought me back reason and fortitude. Where was I—and why was I there?

I was lying in this cellar desperately wounded, probably to my death; and there were others with me, sharers of this cold, earthy couch—four others, lying stiff and stark, the men of my own regiment, my own men, whom I had led to the shambles.

There was still another body lying a little apart, and I recognised it as the young leader at whom I had fired. There was a grim satisfaction in that. But one for five!

The hours went on, and I lay still in a comatose state, as if dead. I thought in a dreamy way of my mother and the girl I loved at home—how they would wait and watch for me in vain. I had no hope of getting out of this place, for I thought that I was dying. Then came fever and torments of thirst. If I could only gain one full draught of water I would willingly die in drinking it. Then I saw with delirious joy that there was a well a few yards from me—the ancient water supply of the stronghold, no doubt. The mouth of the well was cut in a huge stone. A pulley hung above from the rafters, and a few yards of rusty chain, but there was no bucket. And had there been, I was without strength to use it. But I dragged myself to the margin, in the wild hope of finding a crevice or cranny with water in it. There was nothing of the kind. A piece of mortar loosened fell in, and after a long while tinkled faintly in the water down below. The splashing of the water aggravated the torture of thirst. I looked over the edge and down into the well. How terribly deep it was! I would leave it, lest I should be tempted to throw myself to the bottom. I was about to lay myself beside the comrade nearest to me, when some instinct or the warning of some

beneficent power sent me crawling back to my old place at the farthest side from the well. On my way I found that I was wounded in the foot as well as the head. A bullet had struck my foot near the heel, tearing away a great piece of my boot, and leaving the spur dangling by a filament. The boot gave horrible torture to the swollen member. I tried to get it off, but fainted from pain in the attempt.

Reviving, I became a prey to sad thoughts. Oh, that it had been given me to die, sword in hand, on the field of battle, in some of the glorious encounters of the war! Then with what honour would my name have been inscribed on the family pedigree, my battered sword would have hung in my father's hall, and the children of the race would talk with pride of Uncle Ulrich the brave ritter, who had died in battle with the French. But to be missing, never accounted for—a taint of suspicion, perhaps, clouding my name!

Time went on, and I heard a slight movement above. A concealed trap in the roof was opened, and two people descended—the farmer and his daughter Augustine. I first felt a thrill of joy at the thought of human help and succour. Then I remembered that my life would be to one of them, at least, a sentence of death. If the farmer found me alive, he must kill me. There was no other way of safety. I was an enemy, too—an invader. I should have done it myself in his place. So I lay perfectly still.

The girl was sobbing and weeping bitterly, while her father only replied to her in reproaches and complaints.

It was her folly, he was saying, that had brought the francs-tireurs to the house. She must needs take up with that vanrien captain of vagabonds, when she might have had his good friend Pierre, who, if he had fifty years, was worth a thousand francs for every year. And to hide them in his house, to bring down destruction upon them! And now they had gone off with his two beautiful horses, as well as with those of the accursed Prussians.

"How was I to know?" asked Augustine tearfully, "did not Jean come open-mouthed with the news that the whole army was upon us, and then I saw the helmets gleaming over the hill. Have you no feeling for the braves who risk their lives for their country? Ah, Léon, my brave Léon, my cherished one!"

Augustine threw herself upon the body of the franc-tireur, and called upon him

with many moving, tender words, to speak to her, to give her one kiss. And would you believe it, her grief was rather a joy to me? I thought of my dead comrades, and my heart was hardened; for, somehow, the girl's sorrow seemed to partly satisfy the great desire in my heart for revenge.

The farmer did not leave his daughter long to her grief. He called her to him, and they took their stand by the body farthest from me. I watched them through half-closed eyes. What were they going to do? *Lieber Gott!* they were going to throw us all into the well!

"Are you sure he is dead, father?" said Augustine, as she raised her dreadful burden, "his limbs are quite supple."

"Dead or alive, in he goes," cried the farmer.

Dull reverberations succeeded, and a final sudden splash. Ah, it was deep that well, deep down into the bowels of the earth! And I should soon take the sickening leap, with the horrid bed of death at the bottom; there to lie immured fathoms deep, out of human ken for all eternity.

All of a sudden, a bell resounded through the house, audible even here, and I thought I could make out the muffled tramp of horses and men. The two paused over their task, and looked at each other, a dull horror in their faces.

"We must not be found here," whispered the farmer, "come along, quick, Augustine; we will come back and finish presently."

They hurried away and through the trap-door. And now I felt the least glimpse of hope. It might be that a party of my own regiment had come in search of the missing. It might be they who were tramping about overhead. Had I strength to raise my voice and give the alarm? Alas, no! I sank back exhausted, my loudest shout only a faint whisper.

The noise above ceased, and once more the trap opened, and Augustine and her father came down. The latter was almost in good spirits. He chuckled over the late visit of the Prussians. They had searched the house hastily just now, but had never found the entrance to the cellars, and had ridden off in violent haste, misled by some false information. But they were all coming back to dine at the *Maison Blanche*, forty of them, and the farmer was bade to prepare his best. There was plenty of time before them, but let them hasten.

They went to work in eager haste. Two more bodies were disposed of, and now it was my turn.

Just then the Angelus rang out from the village church hard by, and Augustine and her father turned away, and threw themselves on their knees before the crucifix in the distant corner.

The extremity of my danger inspired me with an idea. The body of the franc-tireur lay a few yards away, in height and size we did not differ much. His overcoat was loosely knotted by the arms round the neck. I could not walk, but I could crawl; I dragged myself towards the body, divested it of the coat, and rolled it over me to the place I had just occupied. Absorbed in their devotions, the two saw or heard nothing.

When they came back, they seized the body that represented mine, and with averted faces carried it to the pit and threw it in.

"Now for the last one," muttered the farmer.

"No, not Léon, no, no!" cried Augustine, "never, he shall never lie in that horrible pit! He shall lie in the daylight in the cemetery, the offices read over him."

"Then be the death and ruin of your father for a lover who's dead and worthless!"

Augustine succumbed to this. She only stipulated that afterwards the body should be recovered and buried properly. Her father assented to this, and they approached. As Augustine knelt down to print a last kiss upon her lover's brow, I gave a low groan, and stirred a little.

"He lives! he lives!" cried Augustine. "Mon dieu, he lives! My prayers have brought him back. Holy mother, I thank thee."

"Here is more trouble," muttered the father. "If they find him here, we are all lost."

Augustine had flown away, and returned next moment with a flask of cognac, with which she moistened my lips. At that I gave fresh signs of life. It is wonderful that she did not discover the deception, but the light was dim, and my face disfigured by its wounds out of all knowledge. Then she went away again for a pillow and coverlid, with a sponge and hot water to bathe my wounds. All sorts of kind cares she lavished on me, I looking forward every moment to discovery and death. If either of them once noticed my

spurs of silver, and of a pattern peculiar to our regiment, surely I was undone.

Once more I heard the clank and clatter of troopers. My own regiment were riding up, and I could not stir hand or foot.

At the sound Augustine made ready to depart, after whispering a few words into my ear. I was to fear nothing, at nightfall a boat would be under the bank manned by some of my own men, the brave *francs-tireurs*. And then she wrapped me warmly up, commending me to the care of the *bon Dieu*, tears, and prayers, and ejaculations mingled together. Finding me now chilled and deathly she took the soft, warm covering from her bosom and tied it about me. As she leant over me for a parting embrace my spur became entangled in her skirt. I thought it was all over with me, but no, the fastening gave way. It was the broken spur, and when she left me it still clung to her skirt—a fatal burden, for the sight of it would give the lie to the story she had told the troopers. I had almost raised a cry to warn her, for her kiss was yet warm on my cheek, and her loving words, if not meant for me, were out of a good, loving heart. But it was my only chance for life, message to my comrades more eloquent than written words. I followed with anxious eyes her retreating form. The silver spur—I could see the gleam of it—clung still to her dress. Her good angel and mine fought for it on the stairs, but mine conquered.

A few minutes after the trap had closed behind her I heard overhead a tremendous uproar, cupboards moved, furniture thrown down, loud German oaths and shrill French expostulations; and this lasted till the trap was thrown open with a bang, and my own dragoons came clattering down. I was saved!

Saved only for the doctors, it seemed, for I was in hospital for three months afterwards, and then there was peace. But I never shall forget the cry of that girl when she found that it was not her lover, but his slayer, that she had saved from the pit. And yet it was just that saved their lives—the evidence that I had been tended and taken care of. For I would not open my lips about the well. When I told our *hauptmann* the story long afterwards he vowed that had he known he would not have left one stone standing on another of that old house; which would have been a pity, for it is worth preserving—that old *Maison Blanche*.

JACK KETCH'S FAILURES.

THERE are some folks, units among millions, whose lives have been marked by episodes which stand out in broad contrast to the experience of mankind in general. Whether they wish it or not, these exceptional persons become phenomena, prodigies, marvels, subjects of sensational talk. When we are told of an individual who lived many years after being executed by hanging we feel that he must indeed have an exciting story to tell; and still more so when that individual happened to be a woman who became the mother of a family after so strange an adventure. The instances, as we have said, are no more than units among millions. Nevertheless, they are sufficiently numerous to form a chapter in the history of exceptional events.

A whimsical legend, made the subject of one of Southey's ballads, relates to a man who was resuscitated after hanging, and disappeared from the gibbet in a mysterious fashion. In ninety-one stanzas Southey tells us the story of Roprecht the Robber, believed in Germany to have had some foundation in fact. Roprecht, who had long been a terror to the inhabitants of Cologne, was at length caught, tried, sentenced, and executed. On the next morning, to the surprise of early passers-by, the gibbet was found to be empty. One week later Roprecht was seen hanging there again, but wearing boots and spurs instead of shoes. What this could all mean was left to Peter Snoye to tell. He and his son Piet were driving home late on the night after the execution. Passing near the gibbet they heard a low moan; looking up they found it to proceed from Roprecht. Robber and rascal though he might be, they did not like to leave him in such a pitiable state; they cut him down, put him into their cart, carried him to their home, revived him, succoured him, and concealed him from the authorities. Whatever virtues Roprecht may have possessed, gratitude was not among the number. He did not deserve to have had so clumsy a Jack Ketch to hang him, for we are told that—

Because of the irons that he was in,
He hung not by the neck, but by the chin;
The reason why things had gone thus wrong
Was that the rope had been left too long;
The hangman's fault, a clumsy rogue.

How Roprecht showed his ingratitude to his preserver was in this wise. One morning early, before the family were astir, he took

Peter's horse and Piet's boots and spurs and absconded. But Fran Snoye, who had some little suspicion of the man, overheard some of his movements, and roused her husband and son. These two mounted spare horses, galloped after him, kept him in sight, overtook him, seized him after a desperate struggle, dragged him to the gibbet, and there hanged him most effectually:

His own rope was ready there;
To measure the length we took good care;
And the job which the bungling hangman begun,
This time I think was properly done
By me and Piet Peterszoon, my son.

There are some instances on record in which the punishment of *sus. per col.* has failed, either through some peculiarity in the neck and throat of the individual, or a want of tact in the hangman. More than six centuries ago (if old records are truthful), Juetta de Balsham, convicted of harbouring thieves, was sentenced to be executed. She hung for three days, revived, and was pardoned, as a phenomenon who had somehow or other o'ermastered the gallows. Dr. Plot quoted a narrative, on the authority of Obadiah Walker, Master of New College, Oxford, to the effect that a Swiss was hanged thirteen times over; every attempt being frustrated by a peculiarity in the windpipe which prevented strangulation. We are not told whether the thirteenth experiment was successful, or whether justice was merciful at last. Ann Green was hanged at Oxford for infanticide, in 1650; nay, her legs were pulled, and her body struck with soldiers' muskets, in accordance with a barbarous custom sometimes adopted of making assurance doubly sure. Nevertheless, she survived, after hanging some considerable time. Her body was given up for dissection. The surgeon observed faint signs of animation, tended her instead of anatomising her, and in thirteen hours she was able to speak. She remembered nothing distinctly of what had occurred, but seemed to herself to have been in a deep sleep. The crown pardoned her; she married, and became the mother of a family. Her husband forgave the past errors of her life, possibly for a kind of celebrity which the singular episode had brought to her.

Other examples of a more or less analogous kind are the following. A woman (name unrecorded) was hanged in 1808. She came to herself after suspension for the prescribed period, not by slow degrees, but suddenly. John Hayes experienced an ordeal something like that of Ann Green.

After being hanged at Tyburn his body was taken to Sir William Blizard, the celebrated surgeon; while laid out on a table in the dissecting-room he displayed signs of life, and was eventually recovered. A female servant of Mrs. Cope, of Oxford, convicted of some penal offence, was executed in 1650. After hanging an unusually long time she was cut down, and fell heavily to the ground. The shock revived her. Was it poetical justice or not—she was effectually hanged the next day.

Margaret Dickson, a century and a half ago, was convicted of concealment of birth, and was subjected to the last penalty of the law. Her body, after hanging on the gibbet at Edinburgh, was cut down and given up to her friends. They put it into a coffin, and drove off with it in a cart six miles to Musselburgh. Some apprentices rudely stopped the cart, and loosened the lid of the coffin. This let in the air, and the air and the jolting together revived her. She was carried indoors alive, but faint and barely conscious; a minister came to pray with her, and she effectually recovered. No mention of collusion occurs in this narrative, although some of the incidents would seem to point that way. Margaret lived many years, had other children born to her, and was familiarly known in Edinburgh, where she sold salt, as Half-hanged Maggie.

Some years ago an article appeared in *ALL THE YEAR ROUND** in which an account is given of the execution at Tyburn of a youth, in the time of George the Second. He was cut down after the usual time of suspension and taken to Surgeons' Hall, where resuscitation took place. He was afterwards transported. Instances are known in which a rebound after the fall has enabled the feet of the victim to touch the platform, with what ultimate result has to be determined by a conflict between mercy and sternness on the part of the authorities. A disgraceful scene took place at Edinburgh in 1818. The rope with which a man was hanged being too loose, his toes touched the platform; the assembled mob got up a riot on some pretext, the half-hanged man was carried off, recaptured, and finally hanged on the following day. A scene of a similar deplorable kind had been witnessed at Jersey a few years previously. It forms no part of our

* *ALL THE YEAR ROUND*, First Series, Vol. 14, p. 275, "London in Books."

present subject to dwell on the moral effect of capital punishments; but there is certainly reason for congratulation that the brutal accompaniments of the scene are no longer exhibited. A terribly depraved condition of society was denoted in the last century by the attendance of "the quality" at executions in the Old Bailey. Rooms or windows were hired on the preceding evening, the night was passed in feasting and card-playing, and at eight o'clock in the morning the visitors—titled ladies as well as be-ruffled beaux—would take their seats at a window to witness the execution of some criminal, or, it may be, half-a-dozen criminals in one batch.

Many instances—how many we are never likely to know—have occurred in which the culprit and his friends make arrangements beforehand to defeat the hangman's endeavours. M. Vanderkiste, in his *Six Years' Mission* among the Dens of London, mentions the case of a woman who kept a house of call for thieves, and who was condemned to death for passing forged banknotes. Her friends, with surgical aid, caused a silver tube to be inserted in her throat some short time before the rope was to be passed round her neck. This prevented strangulation. Her friends obtained possession of the body and restored her, though with great difficulty. She lived many years afterwards. In 1696, one Richard Johnson, of Shrewsbury, sentenced to death for some crime, persuaded the sheriff to agree that the body, after hanging, should be placed in a coffin "without being stripped." The sheriff may have been kind, but was certainly weak, for cords had been twisted round and under the body, connected with a pair of hooks at the neck; and all concealed under a double shirt and a flowing periwig. But the cunning was frustrated, despite the weakness of the sheriff, as Johnson showed signs of life even after hanging half an hour. An examination was made, the apparatus discovered, and the man was effectually and finally hanged on the following day. Whether any tube was inserted we are not told, but there was evident collusion in the case of a man who was hanged at Cork in 1767. His body was carried by his friends to a pre-determined spot, where a surgeon made an incision in the windpipe, and resuscitated the man in six hours. Let us hope that the remainder of the story is not quite true, to the effect that the fellow went to the theatre that same evening.

The William Duell who was hanged in 1740, and who came to himself again when just about to be dissected at Surgeons' Hall, may, like Ann Green and John Hayes, already mentioned, have survived through some peculiarity in the neck, or some clumsiness on the part of the executioner, without any collusion or cunning among his friends. In 1787 a fellow named Kelly was sentenced to execution at Trim, in Ireland. On the early morning of the day intended to be his last he contrived to cut his blanket into strips about four inches wide, join them together with strong woollen threads, and form a double sling. This he passed under his hams, fastened the ends at his neck, and there provided an iron hook to receive the halter. Thus accoutred he proceeded to the place of execution. It is supposed that he had found means to bribe the hangman, to whom he made a request to draw him up close to the pulley, and lower him gently when dead. But the crafty manoeuvre did not succeed. Kelly had not allowed for the stretching of the strips of blanket by his own weight, the point of the hook fastened into his windpipe and gave him so much pain that he struggled violently. He was, however, allowed to hang until really dead, when his sling apparatus was discovered. A successful attempt to defeat the gallows once brought an under-sheriff into trouble. William Barrett, executed at Tyrone in 1759, contrived to wear some kind of concealed collar which prevented strangulation; he was cut down apparently dead, but afterwards recovered. Mr. Annesley, under-sheriff, as a punishment for allowing Barrett thus to evade the law, was fined one hundred pounds and imprisoned for two years.

In former times, the mode in which the dismal operations of the gallows were conducted, led occasionally to a frustration of the law's intentions. The unhappy culprit, after the halter was adjusted around his neck, was pushed so as to slip or slide from a ladder. Asphyxia was sometimes produced without any dislocation. Under the modern arrangement a trap-door opens in a platform on which the culprit stands, occasioning a sudden and considerable fall, from which recovery of animation is much less probable. This change led to the frustration of a plan that might possibly have been successful under the old system. William Brodie was executed at Edinburgh in 1788. His friends had pre-arranged a scheme for his resuscitation,

but the fall or drop was greater than had been expected, and he was quite dead when cut down. There is an old Scotch saying, "Brodie's drap was too much for Brodie," which we believe refers to the case of this same William Brodie, for the "drap," or drop, or fall, was too great for the vital organism to resist.

A reprieve has sometimes arrived too late to save the poor wretch in whose behalf it had been obtained. More fortunate was a burglar who was hanged in 1705, for the reprieve arrived when life was only half extinct. He was quickly cut down, placed under medical care, bled, and restored. A reprieve of another kind, from the effects of a foolhardy trick, came a little too late. In 1806 a youth, aged about sixteen, named Matthew Mark Watson, resolved to make a small attempt at hanging himself, "to see how it felt." He went into a cellar, and succeeded more completely than had been intended, for he was found hanging with life quite extinct. A strange mania this. The examples to illustrate it are more numerous than most of us would suppose. In all probability a morbid taste for the sensational is actively at work, strengthened, perhaps, by too much reading of the Newgate Calendar kind of literature; curiosity leads some men a long way; and a few among the number appear to be imbued with a wish to ascertain experimentally the (partial) result of the *modus operandi*.

A question has arisen which very few living persons are in a position to answer, viz. what are the sensations experienced during hanging? Some of the few who have been able to give any account of their consciousness at so critical a moment say that, after one instant of pain, the chief sensation is that of a mass of brilliant colours filling the eyeballs. The Quarterly Review (vol. lxxxv.), treating on this matter, says: "An acquaintance of Lord Bacon, who meant to hang himself partially, lost his footing, and was cut down at the last extremity, having nearly paid for his curiosity with his life. He declared that he felt no pain, and his only sensations were of fire before his eyes, which changed first to black and then to sky-blue. These colours are even a source of pleasure. A Captain Montagnac, who was executed in France during the religious wars, but was rescued from the gibbet at the intercession of Marshal Turenne, complained that, having lost all pain in an instant, he had been taken from a light of

which the charm defied description. Another criminal, who escaped through the breaking of the halter, said that, after a second or two of suffering, a light appeared, and across it a most beautiful avenue of trees." All agree that the uneasiness is quite momentary, that a pleasurable feeling immediately succeeds, that colours of various hues start up before the eyes, and that these having been gazed at for a limited space, the rest is oblivion. The mind, averted from the reality of the situation, is engaged in scenes the most remote from that which fills the eye of the spectator.

Medical men have paid much attention to the anatomy of the neck and throat, in regard to the circumstances which bring about asphyxia, suffocation, or choking. Some necks, as we have said, possess a power of resisting these effects in a very remarkable degree; and a few surgeons, we have seen, have rendered aid in frustrating the intentions of law by taking advantage of such exceptional conditions. But this is a regrettable application of science; if a man deserves to escape from death he ought not to be condemned to death in the first instance.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I. MIDAS.

THERE is a story somewhere of a man who was at once the richest and the poorest man in the world. He was the owner of a diamond; not of a common brilliant, but of one that would have glorified the crown of an emperor, one of the great stones with historical names, such as the Mountain of Light, or the Ocean of Splendour. According to the rules used by the dealers, it would have been dirt cheap at I know not how many hundreds of thousands of pounds; so that the owner of it was a capitalist of the first water. And yet he would have been richer had the stone been sheer paste in a gilt setting. Neither purchaser nor pawnbroker could afford to look at such a monster of value; and so he had to starve.

The story is not the less pathetic for being probably untrue; and, indeed, it is no more untrue than any other fable. It

is for ever the greatest jewels that bring in the smallest dividends. Nobody ever yet found honour or honesty paying callings, for, whenever honesty becomes policy, it ceases to be honesty.

And so it was all very well to write "Finis" at the end of a work that was intended to take the world by storm, for the reason that it was based upon the foundation of containing no single element of popularity. Indeed it was so well to have written "Finis" that the word seemed to mean the very end of the whole matter. The work had been done; and nothing now remained but to put it away into a drawer, and fulfil its destiny by lying there until "Finis" should be copied into the last page of the last volume of the world.

It had been written, not in Deepweald, but in London, where beyond all question "Finis" is written to more labours and more hopes than even upon the road to the North Pole. John March had duly received his salary; and, as he had clearly foreseen, the sum had lasted long enough to finish the score. And, had he died at the same moment, all would have been well. Unhappily, like the man who calculated his proper term of life from the insurance tables, without a single error, and then divided his capital into so many parts as there were years, he somehow forgot to die at the right time. There was his work, there was the world, ripe and ready for marriage. But the world was just as deaf to his fiat lux as he was to every voice, even to that of Celia.

And as Celia herself was blind to the whole life-history that had been taking place under her very eyes.

Lord Quorne's cucumber had won the prize, and Lord Quorne was a proud and happy man. Much to the relief of his wife, who little knew the reputation she was leaving behind her in Deepweald—for, thanks to her non-appearance at the cathedral service, Gaveston's credit had been saved—the household left Hinchford and returned, though at an out-of-the-way season of the year, to Park-lane. Clari had been blown away by one of those winds that were always blowing her about the world in Prosper's company. Walter Gordon had gone back to his studio in London.

But he had not come back just as he had left it. Contrariwise from him who had gone out to look for his father's ass

and found a kingdom, he had gone down into the country for no less a purpose than to paint the portrait of a real countess, and had found—what he found out when he came back to his studio and found it empty of everything but self. Self reflected from the mirrors in Venetian frames; self thrown into the realities of tobacco-pipes and the affectations of a semi-amateur; and, finally, self in the midst of it all, and regarding self in all these things—and all of them, even self itself, unspeakably small.

"Why, in the name of idiocy, should I bother my head about the girl?" he asked himself, half crossly—quite crossly was still beyond him—as he stood with his back to the fireplace and smoked with new energy. "It's absurd; and it puts one out of temper. Why the deuce do they sell cigars that won't draw? I'll try a pipe—a pipe's a philosopher, and makes one think sensibly. She's pretty; very different to what she was at Lindenheim. And it's the best sort of prettiness that comes afterwards, like a second thought of Nature after she's old enough to do her work well. And there are, I suppose, three hundred pretty girls in the world, only counting the ones I've seen; so that's nothing. And even her eyes are no more fit to compare with Clari's than my nose is the Apollo Belvedere's. They'd be better eyes, though, to look at in the long run. One does get tired of reading books that have a new puzzle in every page one turns over. There's such a thing as monotony in variety. Well, she certainly isn't over clever, either. And a Lindenheimer isn't like to be sung off his feet any more than chaff is likely to catch an old sparrow. I don't know anything about her, except that she hasn't a penny, and that her father is a—— Well, I won't flatter him, and I can't think of a bad name in French, English, German, or Italian that wouldn't be an outrageous compliment to him. For aught I know, she may take after her father in temper, lunacy—everything but looks, thank the gods. Though how the mother of a pretty girl ever came to take up with such a misshapen brute is beyond all understanding. It's Talleyrand's impudence turned into a compliment with a vengeance. Let me see. I've seen her just three times—not counting every day for a year at Lindenheim—once in the street, once at her house, once at Hinchford. What a life for a girl! To be shut up with a deaf bully at Deep-

would. It's lucky for her she never had the ghost of an ambition—she never had brains enough for that. But, after all, a girl's a girl. It mustn't be, and it shan't be. After all, it is but right that one should let one's head bother itself a little about a fly in a beer-jug or a moth in a candle. One does get tired, I suppose, of never bothering oneself about anything. Clari won't, and Lady Quorne will forget; and if there's nobody else to help a lame dog over a stile, I suppose I'm in for it. So here goes.—Come in!"

Ill-temper was so unfamiliar to Walter Gordon that, with his love of novelty, he rather liked the sensation than otherwise. His mind was of anything but a sentimental cast, or he would hardly have compared any girl to a lame dog or a fly in a jug of beer. And he was obviously right, from a reasonable point of view, in asking himself why he should let more than half a thought run upon a girl of whom he knew nothing, but that he had flirted with her for a year à la mode de Lindenheim; which means even less than à la mode de salon, if possible. For in Lindenheim Platonics were not only believed in, but practised to the spirit as well as to the letter, strange as it may seem to those who have, out of Lindenheim, ventured upon that seductive experiment and failed with the usual ignominy. But can ill-temper ever be a pleasant sensation? Not wholly. But ask the young plants, when they are grudgingly, and as slowly as they can, being forced by some unknown power out of the warm earth into the bleak air of early spring, if they would rather return into their shelter. Probably they would make no answer, but only keep on growing until, some fine morning, the real, warm sun told them what they were going through all this pain for. Their entry into life is sullen and hard; but they never dream of growing back into themselves again. Does anyone ever feel the first needle-pricks of love quite willingly, unless his skin is rendered callous by custom? To bear its stabs and its blows is easy enough, and sweet enough too, for most of us; but they never come till the pins and needles have been changed into clubs and lances. It is in the needles and the pins that the stings lie which will make even the wisest of mortals feel a little conscious of feeling like a fool, or even the most foolish, who are far less given than the wise to feeling like fools.

And the result was that Walter Gordon said "Come in!" a little sharply.

His studio was public property; so it was not wonderful that he should have visitors within ten minutes of his arrival. Indeed, ten minutes very seldom passed at any time without a visitor of some sort—of every sort indeed except buyers and dealers. And he was fortunate enough to be able to dispense with these. So open was his studio, that some half-dozen men never quite realised that it was not their own, save in the matter of rent and incidental expenses. And so, in addition to its natural attributes as the hobby of a well-off quasi painter, who could afford all the properties nearly as well as Lady Quorne herself, there had grown up all over it an accretion of everybody's goods and chattels, in the shape of foils, odd pipes, and the multiform litter that Bohemian loungers generally manage to drop behind them. For he was an amateur Bohemian, and was therefore as the quarry whom those good, honest fellows, the Bohemians proper, regard as legitimate prey. And, indeed, what business has a man with money to trespass among men whose profession it is to use the pockets of others? For there never yet was an honest, jolly dog who was not ready to spend or lend; and to do either he must as largely have borrowed, and never repaid.

There were three visitors on this occasion; and they respectively represented three aspects of the career of that rolling stone who was named Walter Gordon. One was—of course—a painter who had been in Rome; another, a young doctor who had studied in Paris; the third, a rising pianist from Lindenheim. Oxford and Jena were not represented; but that was merely accidental.

"May we come in?" asked Green, the painter, with elaborately timid humility. He was a small man, with the set, inward smile of one who is always on the point of making a joke and spends his lifetime in the process; for the joke never comes. He did not affect the outward and visible signs of genius, but rather took advantage of a face grotesquely ugly enough to make the fortune of a low comedian, to set up a reputation for brilliant humour pending the actual delivery of the magnificent epigram that was still in embryo.

"Come in? Why not?" asked Walter, nodding to his three friends collectively.

"I didn't know but what you might

draw the line at duchesses—that's all. But if I may, I will." Bohemia is always severe upon those who associate with lords and ladies; even in Republican Bohemia, envy is not altogether unknown.

"Duchesses?" asked Walter, without in the least appreciating the sarcasm, and groping a little for the possible epigram that might at last have found its way into the world. "No—I give it up. Come in, all of you. You won't find any duchesses here. I've only just come back myself. What's the news?"

"Fancy a man coming to London for news!" said Green.

"Well, I have none. I've been down at Hinchford, Lord Quorne's place, where all the talk was of cucumbers. Don't ask me to touch salmon for ten years to come."

"And where is Hinchford?"

"Hinchford? About a dozen miles from Deepweald."

"Deepweald—Deepweald? Why, that's where Lucas is gone," said Lawrence, the pianist from Lindenheim. "A lucky fellow he is, too. I saw him just before he went down. Did you come across him?"

"No. What should Lucas be doing at Deepweald? And how should I know? I wasn't in the place more than three times. But all Lindenheim seems to have been gathering together in Deepweald."

"Why, who else did you see there?"

"Oh—only Miss March, Fräulein Celia. She lives there," said Walter, carelessly. Somehow the name of Celia seemed to have gathered a new significance, since he had left its owner a hundred miles away, so that its pronunciation became a kind of event that must needs draw conscious notice. He was vexed with himself, both for the sensation of tender sweetness in the five little letters, and for having mentioned her at all before anyone who could not concern her. For the first time in his life, he made a conscious attempt to change the current of a talk; and, being utterly unpractised in such small hypocrisies, he failed. The name "Celia" seemed to have stopped the way to other words.

"What—your old Lindenheim sweetheart?" said Lawrence. "By Jove, I had forgotten her. But I remember her—she used to practise eight hours a day, and rest herself by practising. We don't seem to have invented gunpowder yet, we Lindenheimers; and yet there are enough of us too. Yes, I remember that girl; a plain, shy little thing, who never got into scrapes, and lodged at The Golden Lion.

Perhaps she and Lucas will make a match of it—who knows? What a queer thing it is to meet an old sweetheart, aus Lindenheim! When I was in Berlin last spring, I met Fräulein Irma, that I was in love with over head and ears, and ruined myself for her in violets and chocolate almonds—or was that you? Yes, by-the-way, it was you that used to make Irma eat too many bonbons; it was Lotte that I—no, that was you, too. By Jove, Gordon, you were a regular Don Juan in those days."

"On n'aime plus jamais, comme on aime à vingt ans," sang Walter, recovering all his good temper, out of very shame at the desire he felt to add Lawrence, at one blow, to the rest of the litter, and to make him a model for some picture of "Floored." "Let the dead past bury its dead. I saw a more interesting woman than any aus Lindenheim."

"Ah, the duchess," said Green.

"No—the queen. The queen of song—the newspapers call her so, when they don't call her *La Diva*. Not that she's much of a diva, unless divas swear. Clari."

"Clari!" said Lawrence, turning up his nose.

"Yes, Clari. She was staying at Hinchford; and I've been trying to paint her portrait. She's the very strangest woman—yes, you may sneer your German sneer, Lawrence, but Green and I have been in Italy, and we know what we know. Italy is the Niobe of nations, and the land of song. I've read that in the newspapers a hundred times. We never turned out a Clari at Lindenheim. I should like to have seen her there. She'd have been an eaglet among the——"

"Blackbirds, and the thrushes, and the nightingales. Eagles don't sing."

"Don't they? But they can make short work of those that can. Well, what are we going to do? I'm fresh from the country, remember, and don't feel inclined to do nothing. I have a month's arrears of wild oats, and cucumber on the brain. Let's go somewhere—anywhere. And first, let us dine."

It is of course quite impossible that a man should feel all the signs of love for a woman after seeing her just three times. And, being utterly impossible, it is, like all utterly impossible things, the very commonest of all things in the world—the only commoner things being that once and twice should be read for three times. And one of the first signs and symptoms is that the patient should cling with all his might

and main to the old habits and ways that he feels, in spite of himself, to be slipping from under him. Neither Green, nor Lawrence, nor his silent medical friend, Comrie, would have attracted him in ordinary times; each was a bore in his way, and to be tolerated only. But to-day—on his first return to his normal life, with Celia on the brain, or on the heart, or whatever the organ might be—he felt the self-defensive instinct which leads a man to seek safety from himself in the company of his fellows. He honestly did not wish to think of the girl in Deepweald, who was as much outside his life as if she had been in Kamtchatka.

"And that is a virra sen—sible proposition," said Comrie.

It was the first word he had spoken since he had entered the studio. And it was absolutely appropriate, if there is the least truth in the theory that a man's face and speech are in direct antagonism. He and Green were a direct contrast. If the painter was the humorist without humour, Comrie was the philosopher without philosophy. From Green one looked for jest; from Comrie, for wisdom that never came. He was a tall, dark, saturnine-looking young man, with dreamy eyes and firm lips—that formidable combination to all believers in physiognomy. He rarely spoke, and, when he did, he never said a word that was worth saying. And yet there was an impressiveness about him. Whenever Green said, "Good-morning," people grinned; when Comrie said, "Good-night," they felt themselves somehow wiser than they were before.

"And then?" asked Walter.

"Where is Hinchford," said Lawrence, "that you ask, 'and then?' Comus, of course."

"What, Andrew Gordon's Comus?"

"I don't know of any other."

"If Comus is to be heard within a hundred miles, why, it's the only English music in the world."

"Anyway, it's the one thing now. Don't they take in *The Times* at Hinchford?"

"They take in *The Gardeners' Chronicle*. But I read all the other papers years ago."

"Comus, then?"

"I shouldn't be my uncle's nephew, else. Is it a first night?"

"A twenty-first, more likely. Do you mean to say you don't know that Comus, revived, is the rage?"

"No, but I don't wonder. It's splendid music, it made me want to be a musician. I never heard it done. I'm only afraid of one thing, that it'll make me want to be a musician over again."

"When are you going to be a Royal Academician?" asked Green, suddenly.

"I? I don't know. When are you? Why?"

"Because when a man has tried everything and done nothing they call him an R.A.," said Green. "It stands for refuge for artists—or else run out all round. Let me see; you've tried learning, law, medicine, philosophy, music, painting—"

"But never Comus. Come and dine."

Celia, in third-floor lodgings, was writing on a scrap of brown paper with the stump of a pencil:

"Six—shillings—left—what—are—we—to—do?"

For all answer, the composer of Comus, the most famous musician in all England, placed his finger upon the "Finis" of the unmarketable score.

"This," said he.

Celia sighed, and tried to prove to herself that six shillings were six shillings, and sixpence more. She had never heard of the man with the diamond, but there he sat and smoked; and wherewith was even his pipe henceforth to be filled? And the diamond might not be a diamond; it might be nothing better than paste, after all.

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IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XX. BETWEEN TWO STOOLS.

IN the middle of the next week the dean went back to Brotherton. Before starting he had an interview with Lord George which was not altogether pleasant; but otherwise he had thoroughly enjoyed his visit. On the day on which he started he asked his host what enquiries he intended to set on foot, in reference to the validity of the Italian marriage and the legitimacy of the Italian baby. Now Lord George had himself in the first instance consulted the dean on this very delicate subject, and was therefore not entitled to be angry at having it again mentioned; but nevertheless he resented the question as an interference. "I think," he replied, "that at present nothing had better be said upon the subject."

"I cannot agree with you there, George."

"Then I am afraid I must ask you to be silent without agreeing with me."

The dean felt this to be intentionally uncivil. They two were in a boat together. The injury to be done, if there were an injury, would affect the wife as much as the husband. The baby which might some day be born, and which might be robbed of his inheritance, would be as much the grandchild of the Dean of Brotherton as of the old marquis. And then perhaps there was present to the dean some unacknowledged feeling that he was paying, and would have to pay, for the boat. Much as he revered rank, he was not disposed to be snubbed by his son-in-law, because his son-in-law was a

nobleman. "You mean to tell me that I am to hold my tongue," he said angrily.

"For the present I think we had both better do so."

"That may be, as regards any discussion of the matter with outsiders. I am not at all disposed to act apart from you on a subject of such importance to us both. If you tell me that you are advised this way or that, I should not, without very strong ground, put myself in opposition to that advice; but I do expect that you will let me know what is being done."

"Nothing is being done."

"And also that you will not finally determine on doing nothing without consulting me." Lord George drew himself up and bowed, but made no further reply; and then the two parted, the dean resolving that he would be in town again before long, and Lord George resolving that the dean should spend as little time as possible in his house. Now, there had been an undertaking, after a sort, made by the dean—a compact with his daughter contracted in a jocosé fashion—which, in the existing circumstances, was like to prove troublesome. There had been a question of expenditure when the house was furnished—whether there should, or should not, be a carriage kept. Lord George had expressed an opinion that their joint means would not suffice to keep a carriage. Then the dean had told his daughter that he would allow her three hundred pounds a year for her own expenses, to include the brougham—for it was to be no more than a brougham—during the six months they would be in London, and that he would regard this as his subscription towards the household. Such a mode of being generous to his own

child was pretty enough. Of course the dean would be a welcome visitor. Equally, of course, a son-in-law may take any amount of money from a father-in-law as a portion of his wife's fortune. Lord George, though he had suffered some inward qualms, had found nothing in the arrangement to which he could object, while his friendship with the Deanery was close and pleasant. But now, as the dean took his departure, and as Mary, while embracing her father, said something of his being soon back, Lord George remembered the compact with inward grief, and wished that there had been no brougham.

In the meantime he had not been to Berkeley-square; nor was he at all sure that he would go there. A distant day had been named, before that exciting interview in the square, on which the Houghtons were to dine in Munster Court. The Mildmays were also to be there, and Mrs. Montacute Jones, and old Lord Parachute, Lord George's uncle. That would be a party, and there would be no danger of a scene then. He had almost determined that, in spite of his promise, he would not go to Berkeley-square before the dinner. But Mrs. Houghton was not of the same mind. A promise on such a subject was a sacred thing, and therefore she wrote the following note to Lord George at his club. The secrecy which some correspondence requires certainly tends to make a club a convenient arrangement. "Why don't you come as you said you would?—A." In olden times, fifteen or twenty years ago, when telegraph-wires were still young, and messages were confined to diplomatic secrets, horse-racing, and the rise and fall of stocks, lovers used to indulge in rapturous expressions which would run over pages; but the pith and strength of laconic diction has now been taught to us by the self-sacrificing patriotism of the Post Office. We have all felt the vigour of telegraphic expression, and, even when we do not trust the wire, we employ the force of wiry language. "Wilt thou be mine?—M. N.," is now the ordinary form of an offer of marriage by post; and the answer seldom goes beyond "Ever thine—P. Q." Adelaide Houghton's letter was very short, but it was short from judgment and with a settled purpose. She believed that a long epistle, declaratory of her everlasting but unfortunate attachment, would frighten him. These

few words would say all that she had to say, and would say it safely. He certainly had promised that he would go to her, and, as a gentleman, he was bound to keep his word. He had mentioned no exact time, but it had been understood that the visit was to be made at once. He would not write to her. Heaven and earth! How would it be with him if Mr. Houghton were to find the smallest scrap from him indicating affection for Mrs. Houghton? He could not answer the note, and therefore he must go at once.

He went into a deserted corner of a drawing-room at his club, and there seated himself for half an hour's meditation. How should he extricate himself from this dilemma? In what language should he address a young and beautiful woman devoted to him, but whose devotion he was bound to repudiate? He was not voluble in conversation, and he was himself aware of his own slowness. It was essential to him that he should prepare beforehand almost the very words for an occasion of such importance—the very words, and gestures, and action. Would she not fly into his arms, or at least expect that he should open his own? That must be avoided. There must be no embracing. And then he must at once proceed to explain all the evils of this calamitous passion; how he was the husband of another wife; how she was the wife of another husband; how they were bound by honour, by religion, and equally by prudence, to remember the obligations they had incurred. He must beg her to be silent while he said all this, and then he would conclude by assuring her that she should always possess his steadfast friendship. The excogitation of this took long, partly because his mind was greatly exercised in the matter, and partly through a nervous desire to postpone the difficult moment. At last, however, he seized his hat, and went away straight to Berkeley-square. Yes, Mrs. Houghton was at home. He had feared that there was but little chance that she should be out, on the very day on which she knew that he would get her note. "Oh, so you have come at last!" she said as soon as the drawing-room door was closed. She did not get up from her chair, and there was therefore no danger of that immediate embrace, which he had felt that it would be almost equally dangerous to refuse or to accept.

"Yes," he said, "I have come."

"And now sit down and make yourself comfortable. It's very bad out of doors, isn't it?"

"Cold, but dry."

"With a wretched east wind. I know it, and I don't mean to stir out the whole day. So you may put your hat down, and not think of going for the next hour and a half." It was true that he had his hat still in his hand, and he deposited it forthwith on the floor, feeling that had he been master of the occasion, he would have got rid of it less awkwardly. "I shouldn't wonder if Mary were to be here by-and-by. There was a sort of engagement that she and Jack De Baron were to come and play bagatelle in the back drawing-room; but Jack never comes if he says he will, and I daresay she has forgotten all about it."

He found that his purpose was altogether upset. In the first place, he could hardly begin about her unfortunate passion when she received him just as though he were an ordinary acquaintance; and then the whole tenor of his mind was altered by this allusion to Jack De Baron. Had it come to this, that he could not get through a day without having Jack De Baron thrown at his head? He had from the first been averse to living in London; but this was much worse than he had expected. Was it to be endured, that his wife should make appointments to play bagatelle with Jack De Baron by way of passing her time? "I had heard nothing about it," he said with gloomy, truthful significance. It was impossible for him to lie, even by a glance of his eye or a tone of his voice. He told it all at once; how unwilling he was that his wife should come out on purpose to meet this man, and how little able he felt himself to prevent it.

"Of course dear Mary has to amuse herself," said the lady, answering the man's look rather than his words. "And why should she not?"

"I don't know that bagatelle is a very improving occupation."

"Or Jack a very improving companion, perhaps. But I can tell you, George, that there are more dangerous companions than poor Jack. And then, Mary, who is the sweetest, dearest young woman I know, is not impulsive in that way. She is such a very child. I don't suppose she understands what passion means. She

has the gaiety of a lark, and the innocence. She is always soaring upwards, which is so beautiful."

"I don't know that there is much soaring upwards in bagatelle."

"Nor in Jack De Baron, perhaps. But we must take all that as we find it. Of course Mary will have to amuse herself. She will never live such a life as your sisters live at Manor Cross. The word that best describes her disposition is—gay. But she is not mischievous."

"I hope not."

"Nor is she—passionate. You know what I mean." He did know what she meant, and was lost in amazement at finding that one woman, in talking of another, never contemplated the idea that passion could exist in a wife for her husband. He was to regard himself as safe, not because his wife loved him, but because it was not necessary to her nature to be in love with anyone! "You need not be afraid," she went on to say. "I know Jack au fond. He tells me everything; and should there be anything to fear, I will let you know at once."

But what had all this to do with the momentous occasion which had brought him to Berkeley-square? He was almost beginning to be sore at heart because she had not thrown herself into his arms. There was no repetition of that "But you do love me?" which had been so very alarming, but at the same time so very interesting, on the steps of the Albert Memorial. And then there seemed to be a probability that the words, which he had composed with so much care at his club, would be altogether wasted. He owed it to himself to do or to say something, to allude in some way to his love and hers. He could not allow himself to be brought there in a flurry of excitement, and there to sit till it was time for him to go, just as though it were an ordinary morning visit. "You bade me come," he said, "and so I came."

"Yes, I did bid you come. I would always have you come."

"That can hardly be; can it?"

"My idea of a friend—of a man friend, I mean, and a real friend—is someone to whom I can say everything, who will do everything for me, who will come if I bid him, and will like to stay and talk to me just as long as I will let him; who will tell me everything, and as to whom I may be sure that he likes me better than anybody else in the world, though he

perhaps doesn't tell me so above once a month. And then in return——"

"Well, what in return?"

"I should think a good deal about him, you know; but I shouldn't want always to be telling him that I was thinking about him. He ought to be contented with knowing how much he was to me. I suppose that would not suffice for you?"

Lord George was disposed to think that it would suffice, and that the whole matter was now being represented to him in a very different light than that in which he had hitherto regarded it. The word "friend" softened down so many asperities! With such a word in his mind he need not continually scare himself. There would, indeed, be no occasion for his eloquence; but he had already become conscious that at this interview his eloquence could not be used. She had given everything so different a turn! "Why not suffice for me?" he said. "Only this—that all I did for my friend I should expect her to do for me."

"But that is unreasonable. Who doesn't see that in the world at large men have the best of it, almost in everything? The husband is not only justified in being a tyrant, but becomes contemptible if he is not so. A man has his pocket full of money; a woman is supposed to take what he gives her. A man has all manner of amusements."

"What amusement have I?"

"You can come to me."

"Yes, I can do that."

"I cannot go to you. But when you come to me—if I am to believe that I am really your friend—then I am to be the tyrant of the moment. Is it not so? Do you think you would find me a hard tyrant? I own to you freely that there is nothing in the world I like so much as your society. Do I not earn by that a right to some obedience from you, to some special observance?"

All this was so different from what he had expected, and so much more pleasant! As far as he could look into it and think of it at the pressure of the moment, he did not see any reason why it should not be as she proposed. There was clearly no need for those prepared words. There had been one embrace—an embrace that was objectionable because, had either his wife seen it or Mr. Houghton, he would have been forced to own himself wrong; but that had come from sudden impulse,

and need not be repeated. This that was now proposed to him was friendship, and not love. "You shall have all observance," he said with his sweetest smile.

"And as to obedience? But you are a man, and therefore must not be pressed too hard. And now I may tell you what is the only thing that can make me happy, and the absence of which would make me miserable."

"What thing?"

"Your society." He blushed up to his eyes as he heard this. "Now that, I think, is a very pretty speech, and I expect something equally pretty from you." He was much embarrassed, but was at the moment delivered from his embarrassment by the entrance of his wife. "Here she is," said Mrs. Houghton, getting up from her chair. "We have been just talking about you, my dear. If you have come for bagatelle, you must play with Lord George, for Jack De Baron isn't here."

"But I haven't come for bagatelle."

"So much the better, for I doubt whether Lord George would be very good at it. I have been made to play so much, that I hate the very sound of the balls."

"I didn't expect to find you here," said Mary, turning to her husband.

"Nor I you, till Mrs. Houghton said that you were coming."

After that there was nothing of interest in their conversation. Jack did not come, and after a few minutes Lord George proposed to his wife that they should return home together. Of course she assented, and as soon as they were in the brougham made a little playful attack upon him. "You are becoming fond of Berkeley-square, I think."

"Mrs. Houghton is a friend of mine, and I am fond of my friends," he said, gravely.

"Oh, of course."

"You went there to play that game with Captain De Baron."

"No, I didn't. I did nothing of the kind."

"Were you not there by appointment?"

"I told her that I should probably call. We were to have gone to some shop together, only it seems she has changed her mind. Why do you tell me that I had gone there to play some game with Captain De Baron?"

"Bagatelle."

"Bagatelle, for anything else! It isn't true. I have played bagatelle with Captain De Baron, and I daresay I may again. Why shouldn't I?"

"And if so, would probably make some appointment to play with him."

"Why not?"

"That was all I said. What I suggested you had done is what you declared you will do."

"But I had done nothing of the kind. I know very well, from the tone of your voice, that you meant to scold me. You implied that I had done something wrong. If I had done it, it wouldn't be wrong, as far as I know. But your scolding me about it when I hadn't done it at all is very hard to bear."

"I didn't scold you."

"Yes, you did, George. I understand your voice and your look. If you mean to forbid me to play bagatelle with Captain De Baron, or Captain Anybody Else, or to talk with Mr. This, or to laugh with Major That, tell me so at once. If I know what you want, I will do it. But I must say that I shall feel it very, very hard if I cannot take care of myself in such matters as that. If you are going to be jealous, I shall wish that I were dead."

Then she burst out crying; and he, though he would not quite own that he had been wrong, was forced to do so practically by little acts of immediate tenderness.

STAGE TRADITIONS.

STAGE traditions are as the heirlooms of the house of Thespis: handed down from generation to generation, and usually much prized and cherished, because of their real worth, or merely because of their antiquity and long connection with the family. There are histrionic traditions that at once brace and adorn like a baldric; and there are traditions that are in the nature of manacles, they so oppress and prison the players.

The Théâtre Français is an institution winning and deserving much admiration. It receives a subsidy from the State, in that it may perfect its exhibitions, foster the fine-art of acting, and specially preserve the traditional method of representing the grander examples of the French drama. It is required to justify its existence by performing, every season, certain of the

plays of Corneille, of Racine, and of Molière; it is invested with almost despotic powers in regard to the repertories and the companies of the other theatres of Paris; it provides its aged and decayed members with pensions. The Théâtre Français may not be regarded, however, as an unmixed blessing. An Englishman, after contemplation of his native play-houses, is fairly entitled to consider with sympathy and approval, the proceedings of the Comédie. But in France the Comédie has been often subjected to the criticism and the disparagement, which are wont to form the portion of a prophet in his own country.

It is something to play Molière precisely as he was played two centuries ago; to reproduce the scene as he knew it, even to details of furnishing and decoration, and with reverence for certain forms of humour, that must nowadays appeal rather to antiquaries than to artists. Nevertheless, the Comédie's devotion to tradition is a chief charge brought against it. The players of the Français have been often credited with being the tenth transmitters of the conventionalisms of the theatre. There are weak brethren among the company, who conceive that the sole end of playing is to hold the mirror up, not to nature, but to past portrayers of her. They are for ever looking at life through the spectacles of other people. Their warrant for doing this or that consists in the fact that it was so done by earlier actors. They are treasuries of traditions. With them originality is nothing. They value in no degree independent study, spontaneity, or impulse, or inspiration. They count the traditions of the theatre as the be-all and the end-all of acting.

These, be it remembered, are accusations brought against the Français by Frenchmen, who are apt to hold in contempt what they designate as the suranné, the per-ruque, the rococo. It was in the days of the struggle between the romantic and the classical drama, that the Français especially incurred the reproaches of the satirical. Naturally it had resisted change; it had sided with the classicists; it had stood at bay before the ancient repertory. Of course, the romantic drama of Hugo and of Dumas triumphed at last; and mediæval costumes, velvet pourpoints, short cloaks and plumed hats, long rapiers and high boots, appeared upon the boards so long occupied by the severe draperies of Rome and Greece. And scenic

effects were now permitted, of even a startling kind, where once a rude simplicity of illusion had prevailed. For the Français had become notorious for the shabbiness of its *mise-en-scène*, for its frayed and threadbare costumes, its faded and soiled canvases. And the age and infirmity which afflicted its scenic decorations had fallen also upon its company; the lovers had become remarkable instances of longevity, the ingénues were approaching their second childhood, heroes and heroines alike had grown gray in the service of the stage. Amendment was effected in these respects. It was recognised at last that the stage could not live by traditions alone. The *sociétaires* of the Comédie, nowadays, cherish the memory of their predecessors, without striving to imitate them servilely, to tread only in their footprints. As of old, in accordance with the terms of the subvention, representative plays pertaining to the classical repertory are systematically produced; the traditions of Molière are respected. In *Le Malade Imaginaire*, M. Fleurant, the apothecary, still enters carrying a certain medical implement in his hand, and M. Thomas Diafoirus still sits upon a pantomimically tall chair; but the Français is not less famous for its performances of modern comedy and drama. It may be said, indeed, that the Théâtre Français of to-day, while still professing faith in the traditions of the past, thrives mainly by producing new plays.

Our own stage is under no legal obligation to respect the past, or to reproduce its dramatic literature; yet regard for the conventional has been rarely lacking in the English theatre; "staginess" has been seldom absent from our boards. The force of tradition asserts itself alike in the representation of the poetic or legitimate drama, and in the comedies of modern life requiring of the player movements and actions only of a simple, easy, and natural kind. Certain histrionic conventions seem to govern him in spite of himself. There is somehow a suspicion, or a savour, of the theatre in all he does: in his way of drawing on or drawing off his gloves; of smoothing his hat, its white lining being well exhibited to the pit; of producing his cambric handkerchief; of lighting a cigar; of reclining in an easy-chair; of reading a book or a letter. When he speaks, when he listens, when he laughs, when he weeps—perhaps, especially, when he weeps, burying his face in his hands, resting his elbows on a

table, projecting one leg, and imparting an hypthenuse slope to his figure—he is alike artificially natural, and, so to speak, unreal. Of late years, a traditional vivacity in connection with light comedy—coming down to us, perhaps, from Woodward and Palmer, King and Dodd, Lewis and Jones—has undergone some suppression. Restlessness and bustle upon the boards are less in vogue than once they were. The light comedian, wont to run or to trip lightly on to the stage, waving his hat, or flourishing his cane, laughing and chattering in a breathless way, and for ever doing something: contemplating his reflection in the pier-glass, arranging his hair, or his cravat, or his wristbands, plunging jocosely at the ribs of his interlocutors—a performance, known professionally as the "sly dog business"—dusting his boots with his handkerchief—odious practice!—never still an instant, toying with all the properties and furniture of the scene, and patting and haling hither and thither the other characters in the play—this animated and frisky performer is rarely seen nowadays. It is the fancy of some of our players of the present, that they are necessarily life-like because they are dull. They act in a numb sort of way; they speak with drawling deliberation, they pause long in their intervals of utterance, lethargy and languor oppress their every movement. It is not to be said that they imitate humanity abominably; but they reproduce a class of personages whom one would much rather avoid, than become acquainted with.

It is due to stage tradition, that red hair is always associated with comicality, and, when combined with a chintz waistcoat, invariably signifies rustic integrity; that a flaxen wig is typical of youth and frivolity; that black locks and wickedness are inseparable. Lloyd, in his poem of *The Actor, 1762*, writes:

To suit the dress demands the actor's art,
Yet there are those who overdress the part;
To some prescriptive right gives settled things,
Black wigs to murderers, feathered hats to kings.

And he proceeds to record other conventions of the stage—

But Michael Cassio might be drunk enough,
Though all his features were not grimed with snuff.
Why should Poll Peachum shine in satin clothes,
Why every devil dance in scarlet hose?

"Pray, what is the meaning," demanded Charles the Second, "that we never see a rogue in the play, but, odfish! they always clap him on a black periwig, when, it is well known, one of the greatest rogues

in England always wears a fair one?" The king is supposed to have been thinking of the blonde peruke of Dr. Titus Oates. Of late years Hamlet has been seen upon the stage wearing flaxen locks, appropriate, it has been urged, to his Danish nationality. For the same reason, Claudius might wear a fair wig; yet who ever saw the murderous king so attired? The old practice of smearing Cassio's face with snuff, to denote his intoxicated condition, has been long since abandoned; but heroines of the Polly Peachum class are still apt to appear in satin clothes. The Adinas, and Aminas, and Zerlinas of the opera-house are wont to be very splendidly apparelled. Mephistopheles and his diabolical connections are still faithful to the scarlet hose they first assumed so very long since.

The tragedy of Hamlet has attached to it many stage traditions, but these have undergone some disregard in later days. In Garrick's time, during the first scene of the play, it was customary for one of the performers to imitate the crowing of a cock, so that the Ghost might have practical cause for starting "like a guilty thing upon a fearful summons." We read, however, that the cock-crowing "being often unskilfully executed, threw an air of ridicule over the performance," and was eventually dispensed with. It is still usual for our Hamlets to pace the platform of the castle wearing black silk stockings the while, and after complaining of the coldness of the night, to divest themselves of cloak and hat immediately upon the appearance of the Ghost, as though bent upon a wrestling-match with that perturbed spirit. At one time it was Hamlet's wont to address the Ghost with extraordinary violence. Cibber relates that, when witnessing with Addison a performance of the tragedy, they were both surprised at the vociferous manner of Hamlet's speech to the Ghost, "which, though it might have astonished, had not provoked him." Booth, who personated the Ghost, was of the same opinion, and remonstrated with Wilks, the performer of Hamlet. "I thought, Bob, that last night you wanted to play at fisticuffs with me; you bullied that which you ought to have revered." Lloyd writes, probably with Garrick's Hamlet in view:

More nature oft and finer strokes are shewn
In the low whisper than tempestuous tone,
And Hamlet's hollow voice and fixed amazement,
More powerful terror to the mind conveys,
Than he who swollen with big impetuous rage
Bullies the bulky phantom off the stage.

Macready and the earlier Hamlets were accustomed to follow the description furnished by Ophelia, and to signify the madness of their hero, by appearing with one stocking, "fouled, ungartered, and down-gyved to his ancle." Mr. Wopsle, it may be remembered, when, assuming the name of Waldengarver, he played Hamlet, wore his stocking disordered—"its disorder expressed, according to usage, by one very neat fold in the top, which I suppose to be always got up with a flat iron." Mr. Charles Kean seems to have been the first Hamlet who abandoned this stage tradition. Mr. Bunn writes of Charles Kean's performance at Drury-lane in 1838: "It is literally a relief to see a Hamlet not resorting to the vulgarity of having a stocking dangling at his heel, to prove the distemper of his mind." Mr. Bunn finds further relief in the abandonment of another stage tradition, which ordained that the First Gravedigger should amuse the gallery by taking off an absurd series of waistcoats before beginning to dig. The Gravedigger of 1838, it may be noted, was the late Mr. Compton—the Gravedigger to Mr. Irving's Hamlet of 1874. Leigh Hunt writes in his *Tatler* of a performance of Hamlet in 1831: "We were glad to see the folly of the Gravedigger's half-dozen waistcoats discontinued. There is nothing in the author to warrant it." Thereupon, a correspondent addressed a letter to the editor of *The Tatler* defending the old practice: "As to its being folly, if it be so, it is an exquisite bit of fooling, never failing to excite the merriment of the audience, without injuring the progress of the play. And as to its not having the authority of the text to warrant it, the writer of the remark is, perhaps, not aware that, what is technically termed stage business, under which head it comes, is handed down from actor to actor, and that the joke of the six waistcoats has flourished from time immemorial, the oldest actors being unable to trace its origin. Is it not, therefore, more than probable that it is a fancy of Shakespeare himself?" Leigh Hunt appends a good-natured note: "We think our correspondent's suggestion not unlikely; and do hereby give our critical warrant for the preservation of a due respect for this venerable piece of buffoonery." Nevertheless, the tradition of the six waistcoats incurred, at last, the neglect and contempt which were strictly its due.

Upon the entry of the Ghost in the

Closet Scene, Hamlet was wont "to kick down his chair, which, by making a sudden noise, it was imagined, would contribute to the perturbation and terror of the incident." In furtherance of this stage trick, Garrick had a chair specially contrived to fall at the lightest touch—"the cabriolet feet being tapered, and placed so much under the seat." Henderson was censured for his disregard of tradition in his performance of Hamlet. "In our opinion," wrote a critic assuming the name of Scourge, "Mr. Henderson, departing from the established custom of the theatre, by sometimes neglecting to kick down the chair on the appearance of the Ghost, which was never omitted by the greatest actor who ever graced the stage, and not having always got quit of his hat when he starts in the first scene, is a violation of dramatic decorum, and deserves severe reprehension. Deviations so slight as to evade the common eye, and innovations so trifling as to be thought unworthy of notice, have led the way to heresies in religion, and the abolishment of order in civil government. Let us nip error in the bud, and not by our silence give sanction to impropriety. Being once right, let us remain so!" These are brave words; it is not recorded that they greatly affected Henderson's method of performance. He was an actor who thought for himself, and was remarkable for the intelligence and originality of his efforts. A certain innovation in his treatment of the pictures in the Closet Scene of Hamlet was condemned, not for its own demerits, but because it was "too violent for a young man" making his first appearance in an important character. It seemed that he whirled the portrait of Claudius far from him. The pictures of the kings, we may note, have been the subject of varying traditions. According to Davies, it had been the practice of the stage, ever since the Restoration, for Hamlet to produce from his pocket pictures, "not much bigger than two large coins or medallions;" and probably this was a following of the custom of Shakespeare's time, for we know on the authority of Downes the prompter, that "Sir William Davenant taught the players the representation of Hamlet as he had seen it before the Civil War," and that "Mr. Betterton took every particle of Hamlet from Sir William Davenant, who had seen Mr. Taylor, who was taught by Mr. Shakespeare himself." The production of these small pictures may have been

convenient in Shakespeare's time, when scenes did not exist, and the stage boasted few accessories of a decorative sort; but the text implies whole-length portraiture. The late king is said to possess

A station like the herald Mercury,
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,
A combination and a form indeed, &c. &c.

The miniature pictures could hardly contain whole-length portraits. Stage necessity, however, may have set the text at defiance, even in the poet's own period, and compelled Hamlet, who in a previous scene had censured those who were purchasers of his uncle's "picture in little," to carry such a thing about with him in his pocket, on the chance of his requiring to exhibit it to the Queen. Assuredly the original intention was that the pictures should be whole-lengths, painted on the panels, or worked upon the arras of the Queen's closet. "But," as Davies asks, "if the scantiness of decorations compelled the old actors to have recourse to miniature pictures, why should the playhouse continue the practice when it is no longer necessary? The other mode of large portraits would add to the graceful action of the player, in pointing at the figures on the wainscot. He might resume the chair immediately after he had done with the subject, and go on with the expostulation. However this is only a conjecture, which I throw out for the consideration of the actors." The actors may have objected, in that they would be required to turn away from the audience while dwelling upon the characteristics of the pictures upon the wall—the player being always desirous of presenting his full front face to the spectators.

Caldecott, in his edition of Hamlet, while holding that "the pictures in little" might be as commodiously employed as modern miniatures, objects to their use, because of the inability of the audience "to judge of what they hear, to make any estimate of the comparative defects and excellencies, even of the features." The "station" or attitude, the combination and the form, could not in so confined a space be presented or made apparent to the spectators; upon such a subject, even the Queen and Hamlet could scarcely form an adequate idea. A print prefixed to Rowe's edition of Hamlet, 1709, exhibits the pictures as half-lengths hung on opposite sides of the stage; it may not be assumed, however, that this was the theatrical fashion of that date. To Holman, who

first played Hamlet in 1784, is attributed an alteration of the stage arrangement of the pictures. A portrait of Claudius was seen upon the wall, and Hamlet produced from his bosom a miniature of the dead king. In 1793, when Hamlet was produced at Covent-garden, with some regard for scenic decoration—Kemble, as Hamlet, discarding the usual court dress, and assuming for the first time a Vandyke costume of black satin, trimmed with bugles—a half-length of “buried Denmark” was hung upon the wall, and the Queen wore upon her wrist a miniature of Claudius. It would appear that Macready originated the exhibition of two full-length portraits upon the wall. In his journal under date the 16th March, 1840, he writes: “Went to theatre (Haymarket), and acted Hamlet very carefully and very well. The new effect of the pictures on the wall of the apartment was a very great improvement on the old stupid custom.” The miniatures, however, found their way back to the stage. Mr. Charles Kean favoured them, and his example was followed by later Hamlets. In Mr. Fechter’s arrangement of the scene, the Queen wore the miniature of Claudius suspended from a chain round her neck, while Hamlet wore, in like fashion, the portrait of his father. At the close of his eloquent comparison of the two pictures, Mr. Fechter’s Hamlet tore the miniature of Claudius from the Queen’s neck, and as Henderson’s Hamlet had previously done, flung it far from him. Signor Rossi’s Hamlet exaggerated this vehement proceeding; he tore the picture from the Queen, bit it, spat upon it, and finally dashed it to the ground and trampled upon it, executing a kind of wild dance, expressive of furious loathing, upon the fragments of the miniature. Mr. Irving and Signor Salvini, in opposition to all tradition upon the subject, dispensed with real and palpable pictures altogether, and directed the Queen’s attention to imaginary portraits, visible only to the mind’s eye. This treatment of the scene was found to be effective in performance, and avoids the difficulties of the situation, excluding alike the large paintings on the walls, which are apt to look like sign-boards, and the medallions or lockets, which the audience have to take for granted are portraits; it seems clear from the text, however, that counterfeit presentments of a practical and objective sort were contemplated by the poet.

It was long the custom of the stage to entrust comic actors with such characters

as Polonius, Shylock, the Witches in Macbeth, and the Lord Mayor in Richard the Third. Garrick made creditable efforts to have Polonius interpreted after a more dignified fashion, and persuaded Woodward, on the occasion of his benefit, to appear in the part, and to play with gravity. The result was disappointing, however; “so little was the audience pleased with Woodward, or Woodward with himself, that he never after attempted Polonius.” Even in the theatre of to-day, although there has been decided reform in this respect, there may be often seen players of Polonius unduly anxious to be comical. The Merchant of Venice had been adapted or mutilated by Lord Lansdowne in 1701, and as The Jew of Venice had kept possession of the stage until 1741, when Macklin revived the original play, and endowed Shylock with the gravity and dignity that are his proper attributes. In the hands of the low comedians, Dogget, Griffin, and Anthony Aston, the Shylock of Lord Lansdowne’s adaptation had been a very ridiculous figure; but this comic treatment of the character had so amused and gratified the public, that much doubt was expressed at the prudence of Macklin’s reform. The actors, always timid about innovation, declared he would spoil the performance; Quin, who was to play Antonio, told him he would be hissed off the stage for his presumption; Fleetwood, the manager, urged him to abandon his resolution. Macklin held firm, however; during rehearsal he simply repeated the speeches of the character, without disclosing by look, or tone, or gesture, the manner in which he designed to act it at night. He was most anxious as to the result; he was sure he was right; but he was not sure that he could persuade his audience to think so. When he entered, not a hand moved to encourage him. But after his first scene, the applause was enthusiastic, his triumph was assured. On the third night he was rewarded by Pope’s well-known criticism:

This is the Jew
That Shakespeare drew.

There was an end for ever of the Jew that Lord Lansdowne had distorted.

Another stage tradition of some endurance related to the performance of Portia. When Mrs. Clive played this part, she reduced the trial scene to burlesque, by introducing mimicry of some well-known lawyer, the audience by no means disapproving, but even applauding warmly.

For a time, the Portias who succeeded her were required to respect the traditions of her impersonation. It was, indeed, almost as difficult to suppress the low-comedy Portia as the low-comedy Shylock. A comic Lord Mayor in Richard the Third is said to have much gratified George the Second, whose knowledge of English was imperfect, and whose tastes were of an unrefined sort. Indifferent as to the Richard of the night, the king desired to see more of the comic Lord Mayor, who appears but once or twice in the course of the tragedy, and is quite a subordinate character.

Garrick had contemplated appearing as the Copper Captain, an admired character, in the comedy of *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*; but in one of the scenes, tradition required of the Copper Captain a peal of laughter, and this Garrick found himself unable to accomplish satisfactorily. There was no absolute reason for the laugh, it was not necessary to the performance, it was merely a piece of stage effect; but it was felt that the audience would expect it, and would be disappointed at not obtaining it. Woodward was famous for his laugh. So Garrick, after repeated rehearsals, abandoned the part altogether. A stage tradition long interfered with the performance of *Venice Preserved*. When Pierre, challenging the conspirators, addressed one of them in these terms:

Oh, thou! with that lean, withered, wretched face!
it was usual for an actor "of a most unfortunate figure, with a pale countenance," his sword half-drawn, to advance and confront his accuser, the audience the while laughing heartily.

Other stage traditions ordained that heroes should always wear plumes, and heroines trains; that soliloquies should be addressed to the pit; that green baize should cover the stage on which tragedy is played; that Cato in his closing scenes should wear a dressing-gown; that when the Tilburinas of the drama go stark mad in white satin, their confidants shall follow suit in white linen. And upon conventionalisms of pose and gesture, the players have laid great stress:

Unskilful actors, like your mimic apes,
Will writhe their bodies in a thousand shapes;
However foreign from the poet's art,
No tragic hero but admires a start.
What though unfeeling of the nervous line,
Who but allows his attitude is fine?
When Romeo, sorrowing at his Juliet's doom,
With eager madness bursts the canvas tomb,
The sudden whirl, stretched leg and lifted staff,
Which please the vulgar, make the critic laugh.

The player's profession, as Lloyd sums up the matter:

Lies not in trick, or attitude, or start;
Nature's true knowledge is his only art.
To this one standard make your just appeal;
Here lies the golden secret—learn to feel.

A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

"MR. AND MRS. DORNLEIGH not at home to anyone, Tuesday, the 12th of June," is what we ought to send to our friends," suggested Eva Dornleigh to her husband.

Maurice and Eva Dornleigh were a young married couple. That is, comparatively a young married couple. The 12th of June was the second anniversary of their wedding-day, and this was their first season in town.

Such a season! What with balls, dinners, "At homes," five o'clock teas, conversaziones, operas, musical evenings, and amateur theatricals, they had not been able to keep one evening to themselves; and as for the daytime, well there was no daytime to speak of, when you had subtracted the necessary hours for sleep, several meals, the Park, shopping, visiting, garden-parties, the Zoo, Hurlingham, Crystal Palace, and flower-shows. But the 12th they had determined to keep to themselves. They had made a resolution, and, in spite of everything, that day, the anniversary of their wedding, was to be kept sacred. Should they spend it in the country, or in town? All things considered, including the uncertainty of the weather, they had decided in favour of home, sweet home; for, wherever they were likely to wander, there could be no place to them like their own home, with a little extra boy-baby-worship for that occasion only, with a libation of wine to the high-priestess of the nursery temple.

"That is what we will do," said Eva and Maurice simultaneously. Dinner for two, themselves tête-à-tête, at eight o'clock precisely.

Their house was a perfect little snugery in Mayfair. It was what people call "a band-box." A very expensive band-box, by-the-way, crowded with bric-à-brac, china, quaintly-shaped glasses, brass work, English and French tapestry, portières, cabinets, Japanese knick-knacks. The dining-room, a tight fit for eight, was made, on occasion, to hold double that number, and there was barely space for the thinnest and most wiry serving-men, hired from the confectioner's in the neighbourhood, assisted by professional gentle-

men from the greengrocer's, to move edgeways between the chair-backs and the wall, and even then it was nervous work. A portly waiter—much in demand in establishments where no butler is kept—was out of the question. The waiters wanted for this special service were required to be nimble, lissome, wiry; undersized men, as active and sure-footed as Welsh ponies, as sure-handed, and as quick-eyed, and as steadily-nerved as conjurors, or as the gymnasts who, with one hand, keep half-a-dozen knives and as many balls going in the air, while, with the other, they are spinning plates—a feat in anticipation of the subsequent sending the hat round, when, by-the-way, the crowd generally breaks up, being perfectly satisfied with an exhibition of skill gratis.

Affairs at number twenty, Brown-street, Mayfair, did not look very promising for the wedding anniversary. The weather was provoking to begin with. Just like it, of course. In what is called "the good old days," I firmly believe the weather was a settled thing. There were no barometers and other inventions to confuse matters, and almanacks were de luxe. Ballooning, too, was unknown, and an aéronaut would have been burnt alive as a witch, and so effectually prevented from risking his life on a fool's errand. True, poor Admiral Fitzroy of late years tried to rearrange the climate, and bring the elements under something like control. But of what practical value have forecasts been? Can anyone a fortnight beforehand guarantee no rain for a botanical fête, or tell us what orders we are to give our tailors and haberdasher for June and July next? Shall we buy an umbrella, or shall we not—that is the question? In vain we all pause for a reply. Are we to have dust-coats, or waterproofs, or heavy ulsters for the next Derby?

The modern sky (I don't believe a bit in its being the same old sky under which our great-great-grandfathers lived to a good old age) follows the prevailing fashion of neutral tints; perhaps it may have set it, and if it is bright and joyous to-day, it is safe to be clad in dull gray, and to be repentant, to-morrow.

Monday—which is still the day before Tuesday, for in this arrangement there has been, at present, no alteration—the Monday in question, the day before the Tuesday, was as joyous a day as ever anyone of a lively temperament would wish to see.

The trees in the parks and the squares were as fresh as paint, and the colour didn't come off on your best coat; and the flowers were in their première jeunesse: and the London birds were twittering and chirping in their peculiar cockney fashion; for London birds have their own particular style, they don't sing, they have a business-like twitter throughout the week, which they drop on Sundays for a most respectable and quiet note. I do not profess to know exactly what a poet means by "cheeping,"—and I should be interested to hear a poet himself explain his own meaning in prose—but if the word is old English, does it not evidently point to the time when the business end of London was, like the "business end" of the tin tack, the sharpest part of the metropolis. I say the expression "cheeping" points to that time when one side of the way to the City was an avenue of trees, where the birds used to "cheep" or "chepe," and hence the name Cheepside. I don't insist upon this as a fact; I only advance it as an hypothesis.

Be this, and anything else into the bargain, as it may, the Monday we have already commenced describing was an exhilarating day; so much so that Eva and Maurice looked forward to the morrow without fear, and with more than hope. They arranged their plans. They would start for the river early. They would spend the most delightful day on the Thames. They would return when they pleased. They would have a nice little dinner awaiting them in their own house, and they would be happy ever afterwards.

On that brilliant Monday, Maurice came out in his best, his lightest, and his brightest; as did Eva.

They complained of the oppressive heat; they had the windows open. They drove in the Park. They went out to a dinner-party; and everyone, such was the effect of the weather, was babbling of green fields.

But Tuesday came, as it will when Monday has gone. And on Tuesday morning Mayfair was foggy; moreover, Mayfair was cold.

"I'm hanged," said Maurice, in anything but a good humour, as he almost flattened his nose against the window-pane, "I'm hanged if we shan't be obliged to have a fire!"

They began with a small fire in the drawing-room. It was a half-spirited,

dull affair, and after much hesitation it gave one feeble crackle and went out.

No sun appeared. It had gone into the country for change, as letters from Scarborough next day, and even from within fifty miles of town, told of a lovely day. The fog cleared slightly, and there was a drizzle of rain. It was damp, it was cold, it was raw, and there is only one way of dealing with a day that is at once damp, cold, and raw; and that is to put it before a good fire, dry it, heat it, and finally cook it, and by midnight the rawest day must be done at last.

Maurice and Eva adopted this course.

They killed time somehow, and looked forward to dinner. Instead of adhering to eight o'clock, they agreed to pull close the curtains, to light the dining-room fire and abandon the drawing-room, play at winter, and dine an hour earlier.

At all events they would make the best of everything, and thank their stars—invisible, of course—that if the weather kept them in, it at least kept others in also, and so they would be uninterrupted by ill-timed visits.

A knock and a ring.

The telegraph-boy. Maurice and Eva wondered, having seen him from the window, for whom the message could be.

Within the next five minutes the housemaid appeared, and begged to know if she might go and see her aunt, who was dangerously ill in the country. Maurice did not believe in housemaids' aunts; Eva did, and also in housemaids. Consequently she gave the required permission. Sorrowful gratitude on the part of the housemaid, who was seen leaving the house about half-an-hour after, dressed in the latest fashion, doubtless in order to cheer her suffering relation.

Luncheon time. Luncheon late.

Maurice rang. Scarcely was his hand off the bell when the boy William rushed into the room, his face pale, his hair dishevelled, his whole demeanour expressive of sudden terror.

Was the house on fire? What was the matter?

"Oh, sir," cried the boy, gasping for breath, "I can't do nothink with cook; she's been runnin' after me with a carving-knife all round the kitching, and she swears she'll ave my life afore she's done with me."

"Nonsense," said Maurice.

"No, 'tain't really, sir, and I think as she's gone mad, sir."

A mad cook in the house!—here was a pleasant prospect for the wedding anniversary.

"Tell her to come up here," said Maurice. He didn't exactly see himself going down the dark kitchen-stairs, with, perhaps, the cook in ambush behind somewhere or other, with the carving-knife or a chopper. "Of course," as he put it to his wife, "I'm not afraid of her, but still it's not pleasant."

But the boy William was not to be induced to descend to the lower regions again. He couldn't do it. "I couldn't face her, sir, I'm afraid to, sir; there's no knowin' what she mayn't do," he protested tearfully.

From the days of Whittington till now, page-boys have always gone in mortal dread of the cook.

In vain Maurice played, so to speak, the part of the bells, and chimed out "Turn again" to the representative of Whittington. But William wouldn't. He refused to listen to the voice of the charmer, and affairs had reached a crisis, when Eva entered the room.

"I'll go down and see her myself," she exclaimed at once, putting to shame Maurice and William.

But before she could carry out her plan, the cook, with her bonnet and shawl on, appeared in the passage, or, to name it in Mayfair style, "the hall."

She was an elderly woman, a first-rate cook, and, generally, civil and taciturn. Her character had been excellent, and her nationality, she had said, was Welsh.

Now she stood before them, a very plain cook indeed, dressed in black, with a gingham in her hand and an ill-shaped bonnet on her head.

"Arrah thin, I'll not stand it anny longer anyway!" she exclaimed. "It's the bhoy that's the troble"—she meant trouble—"of my life. Ye don't know how ye're bein' rabbed, mum, roight and left, by the gossoon here"—as she was good at French names for dishes, she presumably meant *garçon*, "and by the baggage that just wint out o' yer doors to see her ant, and if shesaid her cozzin it would be nearer the truth."

"Cook," said Maurice—he was very nervous, but tried to appear supernaturally firm, though the judicial ring of his own voice startled him not a little—"Cook, you are not in a fit state to—"

"Not in a fit state, is it!" she screamed. "Not in a fit state!" she yelled. "Then it's dronk ye'd say I am!"

Eva, trembling, put her finger to her lips and shook her head at Maurice. But the excited woman was too quick for her; she had perceived the action and mistaken the meaning.

"Ah," she exclaimed, making a sort of eccentric curtsy, and making the "ah" last as long as the curtsy. "Ah, there, indeed! I see yer, mum, making signs and significations behind my back, which ye might as well abuse a dacent woman to her face; an' sorra a dhrop has passed my lips this blessed day, nor yesterday neither for the matther o' that. For wasn't the oath on me for three months past, and is it myself as 'ud break me wurd?"

A light broke in upon Maurice and Eva at the same moment. Yes, for three months she had been exemplary. But from her statement, it was evident that with yesterday, Monday, the term of her temperance undertaking had expired.

What were they to do with her? She might have been Welsh when sober, but she was unmistakably Irish when drunk. To keep her was impossible, to turn her out would be difficult, if not dangerous. Fortunately she extricated them from the dilemma.

"I'll not stop another minnit in a house where I'm insulted as I've been here. But I warn you, ye're young both of you, and ye'll be sorry ye've not attended to them as wished ye well and would have acted truly by ye. But ye're being rabbed by them as ye put your trust in. And as for that boy, he'll bring sorrow on ye, and I'll be away to my relations that'll be glad to see me—dronk though ye think I am—and I'll not take my wages, but I'll come to-morrow for my money and my box, which ye can search if ye suspect me, though I'll search the others first, and maybe ye'll not find then as honest a woman as dacent Mary Flanagan, that niver had a wurd spoken agin her character till this blessed minnit. Phew!" and so saying, Mary Flanagan (in Welsh, Jane Jones) banged out of the room, into the passage, and out of the front door.

Watched from the dining-room window, her conduct in the street as far as they could see was characterised, like the British law, by its glorious uncertainty. She appeared to be tracing a sort of zigzag pattern on the pavement, and resented the interference of the lamp-posts as entirely uncalled for and impertinent. Finally, at the corner of the street, she waved her umbrella, perhaps

defiantly, perhaps triumphantly, perhaps without attaching any particular signification to the action, and so disappeared.

The household now consisted of nurse upstairs with baby, the boy William, still dreadfully unnerved, and themselves.

"I thought she said she was Welsh, and that her name was Jones," remarked Maurice to his wife.

"Yes, dear," replied Eva innocently, "and I thought so too: I noticed that her English was peculiar."

"English! dear, she's Irish," exclaimed Maurice.

"Ah well, dear," exclaimed Eva, "it would have been equally the same to me, as I had never met with an Irish, or a Welsh woman. But she's a very dreadful person."

"She's been drinking," said Maurice, decidedly.

"Do you think so?" replied Eva. "I don't. I really do believe it was all temper."

Maurice treated such a notion as too absurd to be entertained for a minute.

"You might as well say it was the weather as temper," he said.

"Well," was Eva's rejoinder, "the weather might have had something to do with it. Now I must see to the luncheon myself."

"And how about the dinner?" Maurice asked, in a tone that implied anything but confidence in his wife's knowledge of the culinary art.

"Oh, don't you be afraid. Thank goodness we're alone to-day, and it will be rather fun doing our own dinner ourselves!"

"Ahem!" said Maurice, doubtfully.

And his wife disappeared into the kitchen to make the very best of what decidedly looked unpromising.

Luncheon resulted in the remains of a cold ham, with bread and butter. What dinner would be was a problem, for Eva had very little experience as a cook. The page-boy's nerves had been quite unstrung, and he seemed to be wandering in his mind. Fortunately, baby having fallen into a quiet sleep, the nurse came to the rescue, and as she had once served as an under-something in the kitchen of a large establishment, she had just that amount of knowledge which may be useful, but is, proverbially, dangerous.

However, the happy pair had determined to make the best of it. If the worst came to the worst—whatever that

might turn out to be—London was open to them with its restaurants and hotels; that is, always supposing the November fog did not suddenly return in the evening of that summer day—though as to being a specimen of a summer day, that was absurd on the face of it.

The day wore on, tediously enough for Maurice, who had exhausted his newspaper in the morning, and had no letters to answer or new books to read. The weather was against his going down to the club, and if it became worse it might prevent his returning, if he had once got there. It grew colder and colder, until Maurice made up his mind that he would take upon himself the responsibility of lighting the dining-room fire.

He struck a match, with some misgiving as to the result. The fire commenced—but so did the smoke.

Then, of course, Maurice took up the poker, and attacked the register. He made a bad shot at it, the smoke being already dense, and only succeeded in bringing down a quantity of soot. More and more smoke. More frantic attacks on the register. At last he observed that the register had been up all the time. He was nearly stifled. Nothing for it but to open the window. Both windows. And the door too. Whereupon slam! bang! slam! went three other doors in various parts of the house, and within five minutes Maurice was sneezing violently, and experiencing a shuddery feeling down his back, the sure precursor of a violent cold.

The noise of the slamming woke the baby in a fright, and nurse was summoned from the shoulder of mutton in the kitchen to the child in the nursery. But the child was not to be appeased by any ordinary means. Nurse became frightened. There was a rash of some sort suddenly apparent. Mamma had to be summoned, and it became the page-boy's turn to watch the mutton before the fire. Maurice was called into consultation upstairs. Here recommended a doctor immediately. "Would he go and fetch Dr. Martin, only a few streets off?" He would have done so, if he hadn't had this sudden and violent cold. Eva wouldn't hear of his going. The page-boy could be sent, he could be spared, and it would do him good to run there and back. As for Maurice, he must keep in one atmosphere, and warm, for the rest of the day, or he might be laid up. So the page-boy was despatched to Dr. Martin's, Eva minded the baby in the nursery, the nurse returned

to the shoulder of mutton, and Maurice went to make the best he could of the smoky dining-room.

Six o'clock, no boy returned, nor doctor. Baby asleep and not worse.

Dinner suddenly got itself dressed, half an hour before it was expected. Fried sole, shoulder of mutton.

Maurice and Eva laid the cloth between them; baby asleep in its bassinet in the back dining-room.

They had determined to be happy; they had determined that their anniversary should not be a failure.

"What an extraordinary thing about William!" said Eva, alluding to the errant page.

"Perhaps Dr. Martin is not at home, and he is waiting for him at his house?" suggested Maurice. This was so clearly an effort of imagination, that both of them at once saw through the deception, and derived no comfort from it. Eva had her idea about the boy; he had been frightened out of his senses in the morning, and might have suddenly taken to drinking.

So they drew the curtains, lighted the gas, played at winter, and prepared for dinner.

"For what we are about to receive," began Maurice, when he was interrupted by a violent ringing at the front door.

"The doctor!" exclaimed Eva.

"The boy!" cried Maurice; and immediately rushed into the passage to open the door himself.

A policeman. He was "sorry to trouble them, but a assault 'ad been committed; both parties were in custody and the worse for liquor, and had referred them to his—Mr. Thornleigh's—house, where they were, they said, in service. The two parties were the cook and the boy." It appeared that the boy had stopped at a public-house in the neighbourhood, to inform a friend about the carving-knife episode of the morning, when the cook, who had been refreshing herself in the "jug and bottle" department, came out and fell upon the lad, tooth and nail. He fled, and she after him. He fell, and she seized him. Row. Crowd. Appearance of policeman. Departure of all concerned for the station-house. The policeman would ask Mr. Thornleigh to attend the court next morning at ten, if he had anything favourable to say of the characters of his domestics. Deputation (the policeman) then withdrew.

This interruption had not increased the

temperature of the sole. It was stone cold.

Misfortunes do come singly, but they follow one another rapidly.

"At all events," said poor Eva, as cheerfully as was possible under the circumstances—"at all events we've got the joint to fall back upon."

The words "fall back upon" were scarcely out of her mouth, when suddenly, as though some mischievous household goblin were that day let loose to play his pranks on them, there was the sound of a heavy fall, a scream, and a tremendous smash. Out they both rushed. The nurse, carrying the joint up the kitchen-stairs, had tripped on the top step, the dish was broken to atoms, the shoulder of mutton had taken a few turns on its own account, and having performed a few eccentric evolutions, had bounded downstairs, and finally landed itself in a coal-scuttle, that happened to have placed itself—of malice prepense—just in a position to catch it. The nurse was in a fainting state, and this involved brandy immediately. This revived her with such effect that she became violently hysterical, on the back dining-room sofa. Then baby woke up, and screamed. This demanded Eva's attention, while the nurse was left to Maurice, who knew about as much of the treatment necessary for persons in hysterics as he might have done of a cow with the cholera. He remembered to have heard something about slapping hands and stuffing pocket-handkerchiefs in the patient's mouth; but as she kept her hands and teeth tightly clenched, all that the unhappy Maurice could do was to stand by and hold her down by the arms, whenever she exhibited any aggravated signs.

In the midst of all this, a knock at the front-door.

Could it be the doctor?

Eva was obliged to answer the door herself, with her baby in her arms.

Dr. Martin, by all that was joyous! And Dr. Martin was the very man for the occasion. He was more than a match for bad luck and for the spirit of mischief. He told them good news of baby. Nothing to be afraid of. As for nurse, she would be herself again in a quarter of an hour or so. There was his brougham. He was going to dine alone. They should come with him; if they would, he would take it as a favour. He would send one of his servants to mind the house while they came to his, baby and bassinet too, and

nurse could fetch her when quite recovered. And in less than three-quarters of an hour their troubles were at an end. They were seated at the doctor's table. Nurse was at home with baby, and Dr. Martin's house-keeper was in charge of the establishment. The only other incident worth mentioning was the arrival of a telegram from their housemaid, saying that as her aunt was so unwell she couldn't come back that night; but this was explained next morning, by the reappearance of that gay person, with a black eye and a damaged bonnet. She accounted for these phenomena, by saying that she had had the misfortune to get out of a carriage on the underground rail, before the train had stopped. The ingenious young lady, on enquiries being instituted, was subsequently dismissed.

And so, with a good dinner, in the cheery old doctor's house, and an after-dinner health "to their anniversary and many of 'em," ended this Chapter of Accidents.

WHAT THERE IS IN A NAME.

EVERY word substantive is a name, whether we call it *ὄνομα*, *nomen*, *nom*, or *noun*. But however substantive or substantial it may be, it is after all only a thing of air, fleeting as a soap-bubble, changeable as a chameleon, hiding its real self under disguises, often excessively slight, but sufficient to baffle everyday eyes and ears. How few people consider the meaning of words which they constantly use in their daily talk! Still less do they enquire into their history and parentage.

A word, though immaterial—being merely air set in motion by human throats and lips—possesses, in common with material objects, the property of having both an inside and an outside aspect; which fact is rendered plainly visible by the use of written letters to represent audible sounds. A naturalist dissects the component parts of an object, to find out its nature and organisation, when it has any; an etymologist will discover growth, adventures, and successive meanings of a word, by close inspection of its component characters and syllables.

Words have full right to Homer's epithet of "winged," not merely by passing from mouth to mouth, but also by their flight through centuries—sometimes starting from what is called "the night of ages"—as well as by extraordinary geographical

migrations. During its long existence, and in the course of its journey from the East to some European vernacular, a word may undergo more metamorphoses than an insect. It will first be a grub or caterpillar, then have a chrysalide or intermediate development, to become by-and-by a beetle or a butterfly, a bee or a wasp; for some words bring sweetness, while others bear a sting; some are fine, showy, and pretentious, others plain and unadorned; some make considerable fuss and buzzing, others confine themselves to work and business.

Words afford an endless topic. They supply the materials for spinning a yarn, not to say a preachment, which latter infiction you shall here be spared. There is no intention to bore you with reminders to weigh well every word you utter—to follow the example of the sage, who turns his tongue seven times in his mouth before he speaks, because a word once spoken can never be recalled—and other admirable maxims which everybody knows, and which everybody obeys, when not in a passion, nor indulging in ingenuous after-dinner statements, nor coaxed by some fascinating person to reply affirmatively to propositions to which a decided negative ought to be given. We won't enter into that to-day. All I want is to show how much there is curious which we little suspect in words which sound trivial, almost vulgar; and that, of words in the most common use, it may be truly said that "thereby hangs a tale."

The course of daily life brings us into contact with numbers of things and their denominations, whose origin seems to be the more unknown the more familiar they are. Certainly we know them, as far as making use of them may reckon; but that is all. We know for what purposes they are now employed; but we should often be very much puzzled to say what parts they have played, and what services they have rendered, during the course of their chequered existence. As occurs in our relations with mankind, so is it with things and expressions. We know the history of families far removed from us by distance, nationality, time, or rank; but we are unacquainted with the private circumstances of the baker and the milkman who come to our door every day in the week, and even of the servants who dwell under our roof.

Grand words, scientific words, are mostly less interesting than common ones. They are clear and logical, saying just what

they mean and are, and nothing more. Geography is a writing about the earth, meteorology, a word about things overhead. Latin and Greek are most useful in tracing those meanings. Of course, the more polyglot a man is, the more capable will he be of ferreting out unsuspected significations, especially as one old word or root may be the mother of many daughters. Let us only take the Latin "caput," head, which is the source of the English cap and the French chapeau, as well as of capital punishment; for it does not much matter, in the end, whether a man has his head chopped off, or whether he is hung up by the head till he is dead. The capital of a country is its head city; and in matters of business and finance, capital certainly stands at the head of every concern.

Let us ramble on a little farther, following the path indicated by the same old Roman direction-post, "caput." St. Domenick's devotion to the Holy Virgin, says Bossuet, led him to invent the rosary—a sort of diadem or chapeau of flowers—as a worthy crown for her to wear; whence comes the word chapelet or chaplet. The chaplet, therefore, is a hat, and the rosary a hat of roses. At first, the word chaplet was only employed to mean a crown or a garland to be placed on the head. Edward, King of England, said to King Jean, his prisoner: "All those on our side who have observed the one and the other, are in full conscience agreed on this, to assign to you the prize and the chapelet;" that is, to give you the first place in the combat of to-day. Subsequently, through its slight resemblance to the rosary, the name of chapelet was given to a certain number of large beads strung like a necklace, and assisting in the recital of a specified number of prayers, which, in England at least, appropriates to itself the name of rosary. We have far from exhausted this chapter, but the reader may be reminded that the head of a pillar or column is the capital; that a capitation tax is an impost of so much per head; that certain hood-wearing monks are Capucins; and that a sensible and becoming lady's headdress is a capeline. In strict parlance, a horse's caparison ought to comprise its headgear only.

But it is not enough to be a linguist; a little geography is often useful. Let us take a few materials of dress. Their names, like those of jewellery ornaments, are often fleeting, being derived from some popular or prominent personage of the day,

and disappearing with his or her disappearance; others, however, have succeeded in securing a permanent and legitimate place in a language. Our most ancient stuffs reach us from the East. Stuff itself is the German "stoff," supposed by some to come from the Latin "stupa," tow. Damask, indienne, French for light printed cotton fabrics; persian, a thin silk, much used for linings by the last generation; calico or calicot, muslin, gauze, and cashmere—all carry with them the certificate of their oriental birth.

Satin, perhaps for want of a better hypothesis, is referred to the Latin "seta," a hair or bristle. Silk itself, if not its name, came from China, having been discovered—so say the chronicles—most appropriately by a lady. After that uncertain date, it became an established custom to grow plantations of mulberry-trees, called golden-trees, within the precincts of the imperial palace. The Empress, attended by the ladies of her court, gathered in state the leaves of a few branches, and with them fed the caterpillars which we call silkworms, although they are not worms at all. The abundance of silk in early times in the East gave rise to its application to many uses for which it is not commonly employed with us, videlicet, for shirts. We prefer shirts that are more easily washed. The Persian custom of wearing silken shirts suggested the saying that, although they perform such frequent ablutions, Persians are never clean except when in their bath.

In the West, its progress was more gradual. The first robe made entirely of silk dates no earlier than the year 220, and was worn neither by a queen, nor a reigning beauty, nor hardly by a man, but by a monster, Heliogabalus. A century previously, the Emperor Adrian hesitated to serenade his wife with "And ye shall walk in silk attire," on account of its excessive price. Rollin tells us that the first silk stockings were worn by Henri the Second of France, to do honour to his sister's wedding; and now, every Jeames who respects his profession would refuse to enter a family where, on high days and holidays, his calves were not displayed in flesh-coloured silk.

Taffety is out of fashion. Learned doctors are unanimous, for once, in deriving it from the Persian "tāftah," the passive participle of the verb *taftan*, to weave, to twist together. Charles Nodier maintained that taffetas, formerly written

taffetaf, was a first-rate onomatopœia—a figure of speech whereby a word is made to imitate a sound. French writers think that the letter *f* especially lends itself to the expression of any rustling sound, like that made by the passage of a gentle breeze through leafy branches. Hence the "frou-frou" of a lustrous dress. When the folds of a skirt chafe one against the other, it is easy to fancy that they say "taffe-taffe."

Taffety is distinguished from other silks by a special and peculiar brilliancy; the history of which lustrous surface is, that a silk manufacturer of the last century, Octavio Mai, finding himself in difficulties, was literally ruminating his mournful prospects, for he mechanically chewed, as people will do, a little tuft of raw silk that he had in his hand. On spitting it out, he was surprised to notice that it had acquired unusual brilliancy. Reflecting on its maceration between his teeth, under the contact of saliva in his warm mouth, he took the hint and worked it out. Lustrous taffety was discovered, and Octavio Mai's fortune made.

Moire was not always the name of stuffs—whether of cotton, silk, wool, or flax—which acquired, from pressure in a mangle or between cylinders, the appearance known as "watering." It was originally a stuff made of the hair of a wild Minor-Asiatic goat, called "mo;" whence mohair, abbreviated by the French into moire. Gros-de-Naples and florentine need no explanation. We have to thank Gaza in Palestine, whose gates Sampson carried away, for gaze, or gauze. Gaza means treasure; and precious to the fair is the tissue which covers without hiding their charms. Voltaire wishing to describe some intellectual but perhaps dressy woman, said: "She is an eagle in a cage of gauze." Muslin owes its name to Mossoul, a fortified town in Turkey in Asia. Tulle is a city in the south of France; Worstead a market-town in Norfolk. Travellers by rail in Brittany often glide past Guingamp without remembering that it is the inventor of that useful article gingham. The words "tartan" and "waterproof" are already naturalised in France.

From dress to dancing is only a step, although philosophers hold that dance and song long preceded modern costume. The noble savage, they hold, perched on a tree, expressed his amatory sentiments by musical howls. Cannot even a gibbon monkey, the *Hylobates agilis*, sing a cor-

rect and complete octave from C to C? Pantomime accomplishment would be particularly useful while language was still in its infancy.

The minuet was so named because always danced with formal little "menus" steps, by two persons, of course of different sex. They began by making reverences to each other, stepping sometimes forward, sometimes obliquely. When they reached the opposite corners of their allotted space, they passed in front of each other, describing a sort of Z. They were at liberty to show off their airs and graces by performing the same evolutions five or six times over. After which, the gentleman took off his hat and closed the dance with renewed bows and salutations.

In the days of minuets, wall-flower spectators took quite as much interest in the business as the dancers. Dancing being recognised as one of the fine arts, the artists were praised or criticised according as they acquitted themselves. It is so natural for mothers to measure their daughters' performance, not by their grace, but by their own affection. "How well your Marie dances!" was the most pleasing flattery that could be whispered in their ears. "Do you remember," Madame de Sévigné wrote to her daughter, "that minuet which you danced so well, reaching the different points in such excellent time; whereas the other creatures did not get to their places until the next day?" We can conceive the vexation felt by "the other creatures'" mammas at witnessing their daughters' failure to execute the figure.

During the last two centuries, to dance the minuet well was a matter of the greatest importance. One of the first dancing-masters, Marcel, was noted for his impertinence. He assumed the right, which nobody refused him, of making whatever remarks he pleased. "Madame," he would say to a duchess, "you curtsy like a servant-maid;" or, "Madame, you present yourself like a fishwoman. Make your curtsy again, and let your titles of nobility accompany your slightest movements."

When strangers of distinction came to him for lessons in fine manners, he received them seated in a large arm-chair. After bowing to him, submitting to corrections if needed, according to the rules of art, they proceeded to the chimney-piece and dropped a six-franc crown into a silver vase. The bowings to be performed

on presentation at court cost three hundred francs to learn. This same Marcel, delighted with the dancing of one of his pupils, exclaimed, striking his forehead, "What a world of things are comprised in a minuet!"

Essential characteristics of the dance were elegance and noble simplicity, which not everyone was capable of attaining. Cotemporaries relate that, at the Duke of Burgundy's wedding, the Duke of Chartres danced the minuet and a sarabande with the Princess de Conti so gracefully that they were the admiration of the whole court. The position which the minuet held in the world may be judged by the fact that Don Juan of Austria, viceroy of the Netherlands, travelled incognito by post to Brussels expressly and solely to see Marguerite de Valois dance, then reputed the best dancer in Europe.

The sarabande, a Spanish variation, zarabanda, of the minuet, is said to derive its name from the actress by whom it was first danced. Saraband music had the peculiarity of being sung to words instead of being played on instruments. That its strains were soft and melodious may be guessed from the fanatic's request when, dying at eighty years of age, he begged to have a saraband played, "that his soul might pass more gently away."

Fine feathers make fine birds; and the fashionable nobles of that day were not to be reproached with sad-coloured plumage. The final cause of those dances was personal display. They resembled so much the animal amusement of strutting about to show off points and paces, that one dance, especially affected by great ladies and grand seigneurs of haughty carriage and noble mien, was called the pavane, from the Latin "pavo," peacock. Though now forgotten, its spirit survives in the French verb *se pavaner*, to flaunt oneself. The chevaliers, says a writer of the eighteenth century, did the pavane in their armour and their coats of mail. The men, slowly approaching the dames, stretched out their arms, and with them their mantles, imitating turkey-cocks and peacocks spreading their tails. The ladies engaged in this dance of display wore long training skirts, laden with embroidery and precious stones, sometimes even wearing on their heads the coronets which marked their rank. Princes had ample and splendid mantles; magistrates figured in their long official robes; simple

gentlemen wore their short cloak and sword. Dancing it could hardly be called, with only a gliding and a walking step. The style of carriage was everything; the more proud and disdainful, the more appropriate. Vanity Fair could show no more genuine spectacle than a stately couple prancing their pavane.

The name of the courante, another dance of the same period, signifies exactly the contrary to what it really was. Far from running in the courante, it was walked only, slowly and stiffly. It might perhaps have been so called because it implied a great deal of coming and going, in opposition to the pavane, which was performed by turnings and twistings almost always on the same spot. It was a pantomime or mute expression of emotion, conveyed through the vehicle of formal bows and curtsies, noble gestures, and dignified attitudes; but instead of marking a Z, as in the minuet, the courante described a long ellipse. Three young gentlemen advanced, leading forward three young ladies, who made believe that they wished to escape. The young men tried to reassure them, expressing by gestures the torments which such cruelty made them suffer. The girls remained insensible. Then each lad danced away, adjusted his lace, rearranged his dress, dancing all the while, returned to the charge, bowed, pirouetted, begged, was driven to despair—keeping time to the music. At last the fair ones' hearts were melted, and the dancers joined in a final hop.

Professors of dancing and deportment, then, were both pretentious and important. Vestris the Elder, or Vestris the Great, called himself the God of Dance. Nothing could put down his vanity. "Do you know," someone said to him, "that your son surpasses you?" "I have no doubt about it," he answered; "I had not so good a master as he has had." On another occasion he remarked: "I know only three men in Europe who are unique in their way—the King of Prussia, Voltaire, and myself;" in which he unconsciously parodied Pope Sixtus the Fifth's saying that Europe contained only three heads capable of governing—himself, Henri the Fourth, and Queen Elizabeth. "Do you know to whom you are talking, Monsieur Vestris?" asked the manager of the opera, after an insolent speech from the god of dance. "To-whom I am talking! I am talking to the man who makes his money out of my talents." When young

Vestris made his first appearance, old Vestris, in full court dress, led him on the stage; and after a grand speech on the sublimity of his art and the hopes held out by his promising heir, turned to the débutant and pompously said: "Go, my son! display your talents to the public; your father is looking on."

The young one proved a chip of the old block. One evening, when it was not Vestris Junior's dancing-day, the Queen of France chose to go to the opera in the expectation of seeing him. Informed of her arrival, the young caper-cutter answered: "I do not mean to dance to-day." "But the Queen begs you." "I can't help that. Very sorry indeed, but 'tis quite out of the question that I should dance to-day." Twenty beggings and prayers met with twenty refusals. The gentlemen of the bedchamber put the rebel under arrest, and sent for his father, who brought him to his senses. "You great ass! do you know what you are doing by making difficulties with the queen? Are you aware that the House of Vestris has never had a misunderstanding with the House of Bourbon? I forbid you to cause any coolness between the two families. Go and dance; and let your dancing be worthy of your name."

Marcel, already mentioned, was a philosopher as well as a high priest of Terpsichore. He pretended to be able to read a man's character in his gait and carriage. One day a stranger presented himself at his dancing-room. "What is your nation?" Marcel asked.

"I'm an Englishman."

"You English! You a native of the island where citizens participate in the public administration, and enjoy a share of the sovereign power! No, monsieur. That low forehead, those shy looks, that faltering step, show only the titled slave of an elector."

Skits at English dancing may be collected by apronfuls. There is the gentleman, for instance, whose dancing-master could never get him to turn his toes out, and who at last made the proposition, "I will give you twelve francs, instead of six, per lesson, if you will only teach me to dance with my toes turned in." But the direction in which those useful members are pointed ought not to be of much real importance, if Lord Chesterfield's dictum be correct, that every man dances well who dances well from the waist upwards.

In the classic age of modern dances, dilettanti considered their art and themselves as anything but—pardon the expression—small beer. Trénis—after whom one of the figures of the first set of quadrilles was named—was as vain as Vestris, with the additional accomplishment of using fine words after the fashion of Mrs. Malaprop. One day, invited to a wedding to open the ball with the bride, he was late, keeping the company waiting, until another beau danseur's offer was accepted. He arrived soon afterwards. When the dance was finished he went to reproach the bride with her want of patience. "You have too much good sense," she said, "to be angry at so natural a circumstance."

"Doubtless, madame, I am philosopher enough to support missing the dancing of your epithalamium; and yet we, you and I, should have gathered laurels in the steps of this menuet de la reine. I should have danced it in a grave and serious, but by no means melancholy style; but after what I have seen, good heavens! I shall never be comforted."

"You quite alarm me," replied the bride, in order to draw out Trénis's eccentricities; "what fault have I committed?"

"Oh, madame, you who dance so well that even we experts are proud to engage you—you who have rehearsed this minuet in which, I venture to say, I have made improvements—you go—really pardon, madame, the inobservance of my words—you go and dance this exceptional minuet with a man who dances the contredanse correctly enough, 'tis true, but who never in his life either understood or studied the bow with the hat. No, madame, he has not the slightest idea of the bow with the hat. Any dancing-master will give you the common theory of putting the hat on the head; but the dignity, the decision which regulates the movement of the arm and the forearm by that of the leg and the instep—No! Look! this is how to do it!"

And strutting before a looking-glass, he gave a practical lesson on the way in which the bow in the menuet de la reine should be performed.

The contredanse, so despised by Trénis, is not the same as our country dance. But space forbids a further continuation of the present essay on the meaning of names, suggested by and partly based on M. Charles Rozan's "A Travers les Mots"

(P. Ducrocq, Paris, 1876), which contains much instructive and amusing matter for those who care to follow out ancient and national forms of speech.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER II. SIX SHILLINGS.

It certainly was time that something—anything—should be done, thought Celia. Surely no promise that she had ever made to her father in his most despotic mood could excuse her from turning to account every means she had of saving him from downright starvation. She could not be ignorant of the suspicions of a doom, worse even than deafness, that had of late been current about him in Deepweald; and though she herself was incapable of facing the—the thought of madness for him—yet—well, the possibility of it accounted for many things. His morose and secluded life, his avoidance of society, even before he had become unfitted for it, his devotion to one idea as exclusively as if it were downright monomania, his profound faith in a triumph that seemed farthest just when it ought to have been nearest, his strange hatred for the name of Clari, and his capricious command that his daughter should have no communication with Walter Gordon, all pointed in one way—as no one need be an expert in lunacy to be aware. Otherwise—what could it all mean? She could not keep the dread out of her heart, however strongly she might bar its entry into her mind.

Unspeakably she longed for a friend—and she had none. Not one. Lindenheim, with its butterfly friendships, had faded out of her life, or rather had fluttered through it, and died, moth-like, after its little day. She missed the rooks' caw and the cathedral shadows—her oldest friends; and they could not have helped her. But they represented help; for they represented Deepweald, where the people had kind hearts, and where she might have picked up a livelihood by teaching. But her father, in pursuit of his triumph, had cut himself off, even from such aid as might be taken honestly from the Swanns and Gavestons.

Where should her heart turn but to the only friend she had ever known, or was

likely to know—the man to whom she had promised to be a stranger? What she wanted was not so much a helping hand, but a clear brain that knew the world, and could tell her what to do in the great world of London, as well as in the little prefatory one of Lindenheim. Whatever we may think of Walter Gordon, to her he was still the wisest and brightest of all human beings; and not only because she had known none that were wiser or brighter. She could not forget how at Lindenheim, so long as both were there together, he had made her feel that she was not alone; how after he left she trusted to the belief that there was still sympathy floating somewhere about the world; how, when she met him by chance in Deepweald High-street, the old sensation of trust had come back, and how she felt for a moment that all would be well, now that Herr Walter had come into her life again.

Was John March a great man, or a great madman? Walter Gordon would know. Was the score a wonder of the world or a monstrous chimæra, a lifelong nightmare? Walter would tell her. Was she bound to a promise that implied starvation? None could solve that question of casuistry outside the confessional but Walter. How can two people live on a capital of six shillings? How can works of unknown composers be brought to a public test? How is that giant, called London, more terrible than any in Cornwall, to be met, fought, and conquered, single-handed, by a young girl? What could be done—how could anything be done? Walter Gordon could no doubt solve each and all of these questions and a hundred more. But, alas, she was as much cut off from him by the facts of life as by a promise which, after all, might prove binding. Facts are not made of pie-crust, whatever promises may be.

And then she thought, with the bitterest sigh of all, supposing even that she broke her promise and went out to search for him in the great wide world of the Post-office Directory, what had she to do with him, or he with her? So far as facts were concerned, he might be in Sahara and she at the North Pole. They had not even the paradoxical meeting-point of extremes. He was rich, a companion of earls, countesses, and song-queens; the old sweet liberty, fraternity, and equality of Lindenheim had no place in the world. And if it were not so, it was a fact that, after Lindenheim, he had forgotten her as

completely as if he had never seen her. She was becoming conscious of having never lost a certain fool's dream, born, perhaps, in the Rosenthal, in which girls are not inapt to indulge, and all the more when they do not know its name. She felt as if a bright young knight, in white armour, had ridden past a maiden chained to a rock, had gladdened her with a moment's flash of hope, and had then, without even seeing that she was chained, ridden on, and forgotten her as if she had been only a chance peasant-girl sitting by the wayside. Perhaps life would have been a little less sweet for the want of the vision, but it would have been infinitely less bitter.

Is this an over-romantic way of putting the case of a somewhat stupid girl and a young man who, to say the least of him, was a little scatter-brained? I do not say that Celia March would have suited every man—a girl with none but the narrowest professional culture gained from the narrowest of callings, who had passively drifted downwards without a fight for it, and whose dowry was but a fraction of six shillings; nor that Walter Gordon would have been every woman's hero. The worst of story-telling is having to face the fact that, when love comes in, one has to ask for sympathy for two people who would not care for one another very much, unless they fell out of sympathy with all the rest of man and woman kind. How else should they be in love, if you please? Every woman wonders how and why Mary should be a heroine to John, every man marvels that John should be a hero to Mary. And so the unfortunate couple became unheroic, just in proportion as they become heroic to one another. And if He and She, instead of coming together according to nature, go wandering about in unconnected sets of curves, never meeting except by chance, and blindly, they have not even the consolation of stepping out of the great world, where they are so infinitesimally small, into the wonderful world which is so small as to have no room to spare for more than two.

Of course there can be no sort of doubt as to what Celia ought to have done. What is the use of an introduction to a countess if one makes no use of her? She had actually eaten and drunk at Hinchford. But, somehow, it never struck her that to have been introduced to a stranger gives one an instant right to demand help. She would far sooner have appealed to

Deepweald Tower, which, indeed, to any one who had been brought up among the Swanns of that city, was not nearly so high above the earth as a Countess of Quorne.

And so, at last, the poor girl sat at the uncovered deal-table in their third storey, face to face with all the barren rocks of life, and trying to prove that six are seven, and that a madman may be trusted to find a gold mine; while her father sat in an apathy of triumph before her, listening with deaf ears to a burst of future applause; and while the flowers of a girl's life were growing up frost-bitten. She had, for weeks past, had ample time to brood, for the task of housekeeping, such as it was, had been growing lighter and lighter. Her last feat in that direction had been to reduce six shillings and twopence to six shillings, by buying a pair of candles, one of which was now burning down into its brass socket. The room was as poor and empty as any in Saragossa-row—a waste region not far from Lambeth Palace, where the natives, against all the laws of hygiene, seem to increase and multiply, with no apparent want of health, upon the foulest atmosphere to be found along Thames' side. I have made no attempt to trace the career of the ex-organist from the pure air of the Cathedral Close at home to the suburbs of Lambeth Palace. It had been the gradual dead-weight sinking of two people, one of whom will not, and the other cannot, swim, or even make those floundering efforts that at any rate give some éclat to the process of going under water. No; it cannot be said that Celia had risen to the occasion.

The candle guttered down and down, lower and lower, while Celia's heart kept sinking down and down with it, as if in sympathy, and her father brooded over that unhatched egg of his, and sent out slow clouds of tobacco-smoke over it that were only too typical. Anything like conversation between the two was so utterly impossible—for scraps of brown paper cannot be held to count—that, to reverse a sentence of Sir Richard Steele, they were as sad as in solitude and as constrained as in society. Saragossa-row was mostly quiet about midnight; for the nearest public-house was in the next street, and the more industrious natives were either asleep or else far abroad upon their unlawful occupations. The house itself was quiet. It was a baker's, where work did not begin till five o'clock in the morning, and their only fellow-lodger, who

"kept" on the second floor, was a man of marked and regular habits—that is to say, he was regular in being scarcely ever at home. The people of the house, the baker's family, were always in bed at ten. So there was nothing to disturb the maestro's dream of art and glory.

But suddenly Celia was startled by a most unprecedented tap at the door. There is character, even in door-tapping, and this was polite but firm. She waited for its repetition before she said, "Come in."

John March knew nothing of this, and so did not turn round. If he had, he would have seen a tall, harsh-featured young man, meagre and rather gaunt, looking as if he were manufactured out of bones fastened together with wire and whipcord. He was dressed negligently and roughly, but like a gentleman—that is to say, in such a fashion that the eye did not notice the clothes, but travelled straight to the man in them. And, for that matter, there was little doubt about this nocturnal visitor being a man. He wore a wide-awake hat, of a fashion that has now travelled into the Church. He removed it, as a matter of course, when he found himself in the presence of a young lady.

"You'll excuse me?" he said, in a broad northern accent, which sounded to Celia's ears like the creaking of a rusty weather-cock, only deeper in tone. "Mistress Snow has forgotten to leave out my candle; could you oblige me with a light? I lodge on the floor below."

Celia knew of the existence of the second-floor front, but had never met him, even on the stairs. And he was not exactly of the Saragossa-row type, that had now become familiar to her. She looked at him a little timidly, thought of the twopence she had just spent in two candles, went to the cupboard, and offered him the reserve stock of her purchase.

Meanwhile the second-floor front stood in the doorway, making his observations quietly—supposing him to observe anything.

"You are quite welcome," said Celia, lighting the new candle at the dying flame of the old. She felt that the stranger was watching her attentively. He took the candle, and lingered. Celia was no more of the Saragossa-row type than he—less so, one might say, were it not that in the waters of London one oftenest meets people exactly where one would least look for them.

"Thank you kindly," he said, with a

rough sort of respect which made Celia notice for the first time that the stranger was probably—making allowance for his more rugged type of build—not much, if at all, older than Walter Gordon. “After all, I’ll just take a light for my pipe, if you won’t mind one whiff this side the door. No, you won’t mind that, I see,” he said, seeing the curling cloud above the score. He hesitated for a moment. “I’ve lived in the Latin Quarter, where we used to get on without getting somebody to tell us our own names and then boo-ing just as if we’d been told one another’s. And it’s my own opinion that fellow-lodgers ought to be friends or enemies. And indeed that’s my own belief about all men, that if one’s neighbour’s down one ought to pick him up, and if he’s up one ought to knock him down.”

Celia, as she looked at him, thought him fully capable of doing either, if he pleased.

“And so I’ll give ye a piece of advice in return for a pipe-light; and thank you. It’s ill wasting one candle while another’s burning; so I’ll e’en take the scrap you’ve got left. I’m not a fine lady, to want an hour of tallow to get into bed by. You are French, ma’m’selle? Then I’m all the gladder to have you for a neighbour, and I’ll give ye another advice grahtis—don’t count your shillings in Saragossarow without locking your door. Mistress Snow is a good woman so long as ye keep a key for your whisky; but I doubt if she’s much used to see shillings, and it’s ill to tempt a wife with seven bairns. There’s not much a man or a woo-man won’t do if there’s nobody in the room but old Nick, and he, and a sixpence; that’s a bad congregation—self, and sixpence, and the De’il. Are you long in this country, ma’m’selle?”

The old candle had guttered so far that even a young Scotchman, let alone a fine lady, might find it hard to win the race to bed against the flame. Nor was there any reason why, if he only wanted a pipe-light, he should linger at the door, talking nonsense in a slow drawl, as if on purpose to linger the longer.

“No,” said Celia. “We are English.”

“Ah! Well—we can’t help where we’re born; it’s not given to every man to be born in Paris or Aberdeen—more especially Aberdeen. You ought to be French by your looks. And now—” He cleared his throat, and said in the loudest, fiercest of his strident tones; “Twice two make five, and that I’ll maintain against any man.”

Celia shrank back in alarm and looked at her father, but he had evidently not heard a word; he did not even know that a stranger was in the room. The visitor was mad, or he had kept his whisky only too securely from Mrs. Snow, and had deposited it where no keys are required.

“As a post!” said the strange stranger, in a kind of smothered growl. “How long has he been like that?” he asked abruptly, looking round the room.

Celia trembled; but suddenly the eyes of the stranger came back to her from their travels, and all her fear went away. And yet they were cold, steel-like eyes, as different from Walter’s as flint from flame.

“Yes—as a post,” he went on. “There’s naught but a post wouldn’t turn round when a man flew in the face of the multiplication-table like that—if he’s got the ghost of a fight in him. I know what I’d do if a man had come into my room that gait, and if he’d thrown his inkstand at my head, I’d have said guid-night, and been in bed by now. So I’ll just tell you, as ye look like a lass with a bit of brains, that I’m neither a madman nor a sot, but just David Comrie, surgeon, and that I look on the human ear as just the finest bit of work in all the microcosm. Is it your father? Then,” he went on with enthusiasm, “let me congratulate you on being dochter to the finest case in Britain. I never knew a man deafer—except one, and he was cured by Maurel, of Paris, so well that they made him a mouchard; for he’s got such a deaf look on his face, that nobody thinks of talking in a whisper when he’s by, and all the while he can hear a pin drop—I knew the case; I was a pupil of Maurel, who was just the best aurist in Europe, as you doubtless know. Is he dumb?”

“Thank God, no!” said Celia, her heart giving a leap at the thought of a possible cure, and not speculating upon how it came to pass that a man, who styled himself surgeon, should be lodging in Saragossarow.

“Ah,” said Comrie, shaking his head with a slightly disappointed air. “Then that seemplifies things sadly—sadly. I’m afraid we must light the other candle after all. How long has he been like this? What is he?”

“Who are you?” asked John March, suddenly turning round.

Comrie looked down from his height into the worn face of the “case,” as a lover might look into the eyes of his mistress—supposing the lover to have

eyes as cold as ice and as keen as steel. To those who knew him there was no need to ask how it came about that the young Scotch surgeon, as odd in speech and manner as he was skilled of hand, should be buried in Saragossa-row. Nobody ever accused him of meanness, though he lived for the present upon somewhere about ninepence a day, and lodged at Mrs. Snow's for the simple reason that they cost him next to nothing. Even so he had lived while studying in Glasgow, and so in Paris, and so now in London; and always for the same reason, that he spent every farthing he could spare upon a fund wherewith to pay the creditors of that bankrupt draper, his dead father, twenty shillings in the pound, and that he had far too good an opinion of himself to throw himself away upon any sort of practice below his highest ambition. But this is not the story of David Comrie, which belongs to quite another sea of strange waters.

"Guid-night," he said, lifting his wide-awake in French fashion to John March before he again put it on his rough hair. "Tell him what you please," he said to Celia, "except what's true. Hope's just a snowball, the more ye roll it the more it grows; and the more there is to melt away."

"But you said——" began Celia, her heart sinking again.

"I said I'll cure him if I can. But ye know, or ought to know, it isn't the surgeon that cures. I believe a little more than we used to learn from Maurel. Guid-night. I'll see ye the morn."

"Who is that?" asked John March, following the surgeon with his eyes, as if he meant to drive him by a look from the room.

"Only — the — other — lodger," wrote Celia. "He — wanted — a — light —"

John March shrugged his shoulders impatiently. What had that to do with the score? What have trifles to do with great things? What have they ever had to do with them since the world began? A squabble about an apple had nothing to do with the burning of Troy, as every schoolboy knows.

But Celia was not thinking about the score. More and more it was being borne in upon her, that the great work which had crushed the heart out of her child-

hood, which had been the self-devouring soul of two lives, was nothing more or less than the craze of a fevered brain. Not even his own child, who had been brought up in the faith, believed in the man's life-work, to which he had sacrificed name and fame, self and life, wife and child. He was doomed to sit like the mummy at his own feast, the statue on his own tomb, wrapped up in soundless solitude in the temple of art, that he had been building with a life's labour for a careless world to worship in; he had nothing left but to dream in barren apathy, and with henceforth idle hands, over that "Finis," which was in truth the end. But Celia was not thinking of this—a phase of life into which she had not been born to enter. Comrie had filled her with hope of a far other kind. If her father could only hear! Then she could, at least, put a little sympathy into a life that, she was beginning to feel dimly, had needed what it had always seemed to scorn; she would be able to reunite the broken cord, that had just once, on that last evening at home, joined them together.

In a word, hope, as Comrie had said, is a very snowball; one handful, if set rolling, implies a mountain. When her father left her, she closed her eyes where she sat, and let the snowflake roll and roll into a very mountain of a dream, from which nothing was left out but the score.

Nothing else, not even Walter Gordon.

But the clock struck twelve. The coach turned back to a pumpkin, and all the fairy gold remained just six shillings, and not a penny over. They might last for two days; even for three. Something must be done—and what, in Heaven's name?

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXI. THE MARQUIS COMES HOME.

SOME little time after the middle of April, when the hunting was all over, and Mr. Price had sunk down into his summer insignificance, there came half-a-dozen telegrams to Manor Cross, from Italy, from Mr. Knox, and from a certain managing tradesman in London, to say that the marquis was coming a fortnight sooner than he had expected. Everything was at sixes and sevens. Everything was in a ferment. Everybody about Manor Cross seemed to think that the world was coming to an end. But none of these telegrams were addressed to any of the Germain family, and the last people in the county who heard of this homeward rush of the marquis were the ladies at Cross Hall, and they heard it from Lord George, upon whom Mr. Knox called in London; supposing, however, when he did call, that Lord George had already received full information on the subject. Lord George's letter to Lady Sarah was full of dismay, full of horror. "As he has not taken the trouble to communicate his intentions to me, I shall not go down to receive him." "You will know how to deal with the matter, and will, I am sure, support our mother in the terrible trial." "I think that the child should, at any rate, at first be acknowledged by you all as Lord Popenjoy." "We have to regard, in the first place, the honour of the family. No remissness on his part should induce us to forget for a moment what is due to the title, the property, and

the name." The letter was very long, and was full of sententious instructions, such as the above. But the purport of it was, to tell the ladies at Cross Hall that they must go through the first burden of receiving the marquis without any assistance from Lord George.

The dean heard of the reported arrival some days before the family did so. It was rumoured in Brotherton, and the rumour reached the Deanery. But he thought that there was nothing that he could do on the spur of the moment. He perfectly understood the condition of Lord George's mind, and perceived that it would not be expedient for him to interfere quite on the first moment. As soon as the marquis should have settled himself in the house, of course he would call; and when the marquis had settled himself, and when the world had begun to recognise the fact that the marquis, with his Italian marchioness, and his little Italian, so-called Popenjoy, were living at Manor Cross, then—if he saw his way—the dean would bestir himself.

And so the marquis arrived. He reached the Brotherton station with his wife, a baby, a lady's-maid, a nurse, a valet, a cook, and a courier, about three o'clock in the afternoon; and the whole crowd of them were carried off in their carriages to Manor Cross. A great many of the inhabitants of Brotherton were there to see, for this coming of the marquis had been talked of far and wide. He himself took no notice of the gathering people—was perhaps unaware that there was any gathering. He and his wife got into one carriage; the nurse, the lady's-maid, and the baby into a second; the valet, the courier, and cook into a third. The world

of Brotherton saw them, and the world of Brotherton observed that the lady was very old and very ugly. Why on earth could he have married such a woman as that, and then have brought her home! That was the exclamation which was made by Brotherton in general.

It was soon ascertained by everyone about Manor Cross that the marchioness could not speak a word of English, nor could any of the newly-imported servants do so with the exception of the courier, who was supposed to understand all languages. There was, therefore, an absolutely divided household. It had been thought better that the old family housekeeper, Mrs. Toff, should remain in possession. Through a long life she had been devoted to the old marchioness and to the ladies of the family generally; but she would have been useless at their new home, and there was an idea that Manor Cross could not be maintained without her. It might also be expedient to have a friend in the enemy's camp. Other English servants had been provided—a butler, two footmen, a coachman, and the necessary housemaids and kitchenmaids. It had been stated that the marquis would bring his own cook. There were, therefore, at once two parties, at the head of one of which was Mrs. Toff, and at the head of the other the courier—who remained, none of the English people knew why.

For the first three days the marchioness showed herself to no one. It was understood that the fatigues of the journey had oppressed her, and that she chose to confine herself to two or three rooms upstairs, which had been prepared for her. Mrs. Toff, strictly obeying orders which had come from Cross Hall, sent up her duty and begged to know whether she should wait upon my lady. My lady sent down word that she didn't want to see Mrs. Toff. These messages had to be filtered through the courier, who was specially odious to Mrs. Toff. His lordship was almost as closely secluded as her ladyship. He did, indeed, go out to the stables, wrapped up in furs, and found fault with everything he saw there. And he had himself driven round the park. But he did not get up on any of these days till noon, and took all his meals by himself. The English servants averred that, during the whole of this time, he never once saw the marchioness or the baby; but then the English servants could

not very well have known what he saw, or what he did not see.

But this was very certain, that, during those three days, he did not go to Cross Hall, or see any one of his own family. Mrs. Toff, in the gloaming of the evening, on the third day, hurried across the park to see—the young ladies, as she still called them. Mrs. Toff thought that it was all very dreadful. She didn't know what was being done in those apartments. She had never set her eyes upon the baby. She didn't feel sure that there was any baby at all, though John—John was one of the English servants—had seen a bundle come into the house. Wouldn't it be natural and right that any real child should be carried out to take the air? "And then all manner of messes were," said Mrs. Toff, "prepared up in the closed room." Mrs. Toff didn't believe in anything, except that everything was going to perdition. The marchioness was intent on asking after the health and appearance of her son, but Mrs. Toff declared that she hadn't been allowed to catch a sight of "my lord." Mrs. Toff's account was altogether very lachrymose. She spoke of the marquis, of course, with the utmost respect. But she was sufficiently intimate with the ladies, to treat the baby and its mother with all the scorn of an upturned nose. Nor was the name of Popenjoy once heard from her lips.

But what were the ladies to do? On the evening of the third day Lady Sarah wrote to her brother George, begging him to come down to them. "The matter was so serious, that he was," said Lady Sarah, "bound to lend the strength of his presence to his mother and sisters." But on the fourth morning Lady Sarah sent over a note to her brother, the marquis.

"DEAR BROTHERTON,—We hope that you and your wife and little boy have arrived well, and have found things comfortable. Mamma is most anxious to see you—as of course we all are. Will you not come over to us to-day? I daresay my sister-in-law may be too fatigued to come out as yet. I need not tell you that we are very anxious to see your little Popenjoy.—Your affectionate Sister,
SARAH GERMAIN."

It may be seen from this that the ladies contemplated peace, if peace were possible. But in truth the nature of the letter, though not the words, had been dictated by the marchioness. She was intent upon seeing her son, and anxious to acknowledge

her grandchild. Lady Sarah had felt her position to be very difficult, but had perceived that no temporary acceptance by them of the child would at all injure her brother George's claim, should Lord George set up a claim; and so, in deference to the old lady, the peaceful letter was sent off, with the directions to the messenger to wait for an answer. The messenger came back with tidings that his lordship was in bed. Then there was another consultation. The marquis, though in bed, had of course read the letter. Had he felt at all as a son and a brother ought to feel, he would have sent some reply to such a message. It must be, they felt, that he intended to live there and utterly ignore his mother and sisters. What should they do then? How should they be able to live? The marchioness surrendered herself to a paroxysm of weeping, bitterly blaming those who would not allow her to go away and hide herself in some distant obscurity. Her son, her eldest son, had cast her off, because she had disobeyed his orders! "His orders!" said Lady Sarah, in scorn, almost in wrath against her mother. "What right has he to give orders either to you or us? He has forgotten himself, and is only worthy to be forgotten." Just as she spoke the Manor Cross phaeton, with the Manor Cross ponies, was driven up to the door, and Lady Amelia, who went to the window, declared that Brotherton himself was in the carriage. "Oh, my son; my darling son," said the marchioness, throwing up her arms.

It really was the marquis. It seemed to the ladies to be a very long time indeed before he got into the room, so leisurely was he in divesting himself of his furs and comforters. During this time the marchioness would have rushed into the hall, had not Lady Sarah prevented her. The old lady was quite overcome with emotion, and prepared to lay herself at the feet of her eldest son, if he would only extend to her the slightest sign of affection. "So, here you all are," he said as he entered the room. "It isn't much of a house for you, but you would have it so." He was of course forced to kiss his mother, but the kiss was not very fervent in its nature. To each of his sisters he merely extended his hand. This Amelia received with empressement; for, after all, severe though he was, nevertheless he was the head of the family. Susanna measured the pressure which he gave, and returned

back to him the exact weight. Lady Sarah made a little speech. "We are very glad to see you, Brotherton. You have been away a long time."

"A deuced long time."

"I hope your wife is well; and the little boy. When will she wish that we should go and see her?" The marchioness during this time had got possession of his left hand, and from her seat was gazing up into his face. He was a very handsome man, but pale, worn, thin, and apparently unhealthy. He was very like Lord George, but small in feature, and wanting full four inches of his brother's height. Lord George's hair was already becoming grey at the sides. That of the marquis, who was ten years older, was perfectly black; but his lordship's valet had probably more to do with that than nature. He wore an exquisite moustache, but in other respects was close shaven. He was dressed with great care, and had fur even on the collar of his frock-coat, so much did he fear the inclemency of his native climate.

"She doesn't speak a word of English, you know," he said, answering his sister's question.

"We might manage to get on in French," said Lady Sarah.

"She doesn't speak a word of French either. She never was out of Italy till now. You had better not trouble yourselves about her."

This was dreadful to them all. It was monstrous to them that there should be a Marchioness of Brotherton, a sister-in-law, living close to them, whom they were to acknowledge to be the reigning marchioness, and that they should not be allowed to see her. It was not that they anticipated pleasure from her acquaintance. It was not that they were anxious to welcome such a new relation. This marriage, if it were a marriage, was a terrible blow to them. It would have been infinitely better for them all that, having such a wife, he should have kept her in Italy. But, as she was here in England, as she was to be acknowledged—as far as they knew at present—it was a fearful thing that she should be living close to them, and not be seen by them. For some moments after his last announcement they were stricken dumb. He was standing with his back to the fire, looking at his boots. The marchioness was the first to speak. "We may see Popenjoy!" she exclaimed through her sobs.

"I suppose he can be brought down, if you care about it."

"Of course we care about it," said Lady Amelia.

"They tell me he is not strong, and I don't suppose they'll let him come out such weather as this. You'll have to wait. I don't think anybody ought to stir out in this weather. It doesn't suit me, I know. Such an abominable place as it is I never saw in my life. There is not a room in the house that is not enough to make a man blow his brains out."

Lady Sarah could not stand this, nor did she think it right to put up with the insolence of his manner generally. "If so," she said, "it is a pity that you came away from Italy."

He turned sharply round and looked at her for an instant before he answered. And as he did so she remembered the peculiar tyranny of his eyes, the tyranny to which, when a boy, he had ever endeavoured to make her subject, and all others around him. Others had become subject because he was the Lord Popenjoy of the day, and would be the future marquis; but she, though recognising his right to be first in everything, had ever rebelled against his usurpation of unauthorised power. He, too, remembered all this, and almost snarled at her with his eyes. "I suppose I might stay if I liked, or come back if I liked, without asking you," he said.

"Certainly."

"But you are the same as ever you were."

"Oh, Brotherton," said the marchioness, "do not quarrel with us directly you have come back."

"You may be quite sure, mother, that I shall not take the trouble to quarrel with anyone. It takes two for that work. If I wanted to quarrel with her or you, I have cause enough."

"I know of none," said Lady Sarah.

"I explained to you my wishes about this house, and you disregarded them altogether." The old lady looked up at her eldest daughter as though to say, "There, that was your sin." "I knew what was better for you and better for me. It is impossible that there should be pleasant intercourse between you and my wife, and I recommended you to go elsewhere. If you had done so, I would have taken care that you were comfortable." Again the marchioness looked at Lady Sarah with bitter reproaches in her eyes.

"What interest in life would we have had in a distant home?" said Lady Sarah.

"Why not you as well as other people?"

"Because, unlike other people, we have become devoted to one spot. The property belongs to you."

"I hope so."

"But the obligations of the property have been, at any rate, as near to us as to you. Society, I suppose, may be found in a new place, but we do not care much for society."

"Then it would have been so much the easier."

"But it would have been impossible for us to find new duties."

"Nonsense," said the marquis, "humbug; d——d trash."

"If you cannot speak otherwise than like that before your mother, Brotherton, I think you had better leave her," said Lady Sarah, bravely.

"Don't, Sarah, don't!" said the marchioness.

"It is trash, and nonsense, and humbug. I told you that you were better away, and you determined to stay. I knew what was best for you, but you chose to be obstinate. I have not the slightest doubt as to who did it."

"We were all of the same mind," said Lady Susanna. "Alice said it would be quite cruel that mamma should be moved." Alice was now the wife of Canon Hold-enough.

"It would have been very bad for us all to go away," said Lady Amelia.

"George was altogether against it," said Lady Susanna.

"And the dean," said Lady Amelia, indiscreetly.

"The dean!" exclaimed the marquis. "Do you mean to say that that stable-boy has been consulted about my affairs? I should have thought that not one of you would have spoken to George, after he had disgraced himself by such a marriage."

"There was no need to consult anyone," said Lady Sarah. "And we do not think George's marriage at all disgraceful."

"Mary is a very nice young person," said the marchioness.

"I daresay. Whether she is nice or not is very little to me. She has got some fortune, and I suppose that was what he wanted. As you are all of you fixed here now, and seem to have spent a lot of money, I suppose you will have to remain. You have turned my tenant out——"

"Mr. Price was quite willing to go," said Lady Susanna.

"I daresay. I trust he may be as willing to give up the land when the lease is out. I have been told that he is a sporting friend of the dean's. It seems to me that you have, all of you, got into a nice mess here by yourselves. All I want you to understand is that I cannot now trouble myself about you."

"You don't mean to give us up?" said the afflicted mother. "You'll come and see me sometimes, won't you?"

"Certainly not if I am to be insulted by my sister."

"I have insulted no one," said Lady Sarah, haughtily.

"It was no insult to tell me that I ought to have stayed in Italy, and not have come to my own house!"

"Sarah, you ought not to have said that," exclaimed the marchioness.

"He complained that everything here was uncomfortable, and therefore I said it. He knows that I did not speak of his return in any other sense. Since he settled himself abroad, there has not been a day on which I have not wished that he would come back to his own house and his own duties. If he will treat us properly, no one will treat him with higher consideration than I. But we have our own rights as well as he, and are as well able to guard them."

"Sarah can preach as well as ever," he said.

"Oh my children, oh my children!" sobbed the old lady.

"I have had about enough of this. I knew what it would be when you wrote to me to come to you." Then he took up his hat, as though he were going.

"And am I to see nothing more of you?" asked his mother.

"I will come to you, mother—once a week if you wish it. Every Sunday afternoon will be as good a time as any other. But I will not come unless I am assured of the absence of Lady Sarah. I will not subject myself to her insolence, nor put myself in the way of being annoyed by a ballragging quarrel."

"I and my sisters are always at church on Sunday afternoons," said Lady Sarah.

In this way the matter was arranged, and then the marquis took himself off. For some time after he left the room the marchioness sat in silence, sobbing now and again, and then burying her face in her handkerchief. "I wish we had gone away when he told us," she said, at last.

"No, mamma," said her eldest daughter. "No—certainly no. Even though all this is very miserable, it is not so bad as running away in order that we might be out of his way. No good can ever be got by yielding in what is wrong to anyone. This is your house; and as yours it is ours."

"Oh yes."

"And here we can do something to justify our lives. We have a work appointed to us which we are able to perform. What will his wife do for the people here? Why are we not to say our prayers in the church which we all know and love? Why are we to leave Alice—and Mary? Why should he, because he is the eldest of us—he, who for so many years has deserted the place—why is he here to tell us where to live, and where not to live? He is rich, and we are poor, but we have never been pensioners on his bounty. The park, I suppose, is now closed to us; but I am prepared to live here in defiance of him." This she said walking up and down the room as she spoke, and she said it with so much energy that she absolutely carried her sisters with her, and again partly convinced her mother.

OUR GIRLS.

JUST now much anxiety is expressed on account of Miss Britannia. To judge from everyday talk, her mother gave no such cause for solicitude. Mrs. Britannia was another kind of person, and as unlike our girls as one female human being can be from another. There is, of course, in all this, much of the old trick of praising the past. When the writer was young, he had the advantage of hearing the ladies of the same age as Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen depreciated, in order that our grandmothers might be glorified. It was pointed out by elderly persons, more remarkable for their power of vituperation than the accuracy of their statements, that our sisters were not as their grandmothers were, that their vanity, their love of dress, their seeking for feverish excitement, their unholy taste for novel-reading, and their ignorance of housewifery, were too shocking to be endured. Crinoline was made the subject of much unseemly ribaldry. A yell was raised against the extravagant cost of voluminous attire, and illustrated periodicals, of a presumed comic cha-

racter, were filled with caricatures of crinoline and its wearers. It was of no use to remark that, in Hogarth's pictures, figures not unlike those of twenty years ago might be met with, and that the paniers of the last century were the clumsy substitutes for crinoline then in vogue. This comparison was too remote to produce any effect, and the same remark will apply to any attempt to decry the costume wherein our great-grandmothers rejoiced in the days of the first French empire. It was convenient to imagine some intervening period, in which not only costumes, but manners were perfect. Profound reflection on this subject has brought the conviction to my mind, that the perfect woman must have existed at what I may venture to call the leg-of-mutton-sleeve period. The novels of Balzac and of Bulwer tell, I am aware, against this theory. If Madame de Langeais had any analogue in real life, ladies were not very good in the leg-of-mutton-sleeve period; but as the only representatives of that era were seen by me at an age when I was incapable of appreciating their good points, I hesitate to defile the memory of our grandmothers on the testimony of Balzac. So far as can be ascertained by careful study of the few remaining relics of that time, ladies were given somewhat to talk of the smallest kind, flavoured with sentiment and spiced with scandal. With a few exceptions in that highest society, which is a type neither of race, age, nor country, ladies of the leg-of-mutton-sleeve period were not proficient either as musicians or as linguists. They spoke French, of course, and were much too fond of interlarding scraps of that language in their conversation and correspondence, in the manner which lends to Pelham, and other fashionable novels of their day, the air of a menu or of a cookery-book. With every deference for the ability of my grandmother, I take leave to doubt her proficiency on such musical instruments as were in vogue. The pianoforte is a modern instrument, enabling the dullest person to inflict an enormous amount of torture upon everybody within ear-shot, but it was not yet brought to perfection. Judging from family portraits and relics, I imagine the guitar and the harp to have been the chief means of annoyance in the first half of the present century; and I love to think of my esteemed ancestress, with a broad blue ribbon meandering over her ample shoulders, while she thrummed upon a guitar, and in deep contralto, proclaimed

her intention to "strike, strike, strike" that exhilarating instrument. The guitar, owing to the broad blue ribbon, enjoyed a species of popularity until the pianoforte undermined it, and the banjo made it ridiculous, but it is less easy to understand the decline of the harp. This musical weapon appears to have been specially constructed to exhibit the beauty of the female form. Graceful head, swanlike neck, classic bust, and rounded arm, were all displayed to advantage by the harpist, who, if she played—as there is reason to believe she generally did—atrociously, at least looked very handsome. But the harp, like the guitar, has vanished into lumber-rooms and is seen no more, even as the "Poonah" and other paintings. Possibly some of our revered grandmothers were like the Irish lady who "painted in water-colours," and were "of the kingdom of heaven;" but, however much we may hope that the latter aspiration was justified, it is difficult to believe in their proficiency as limners. Scornful old bachelors declare that their youth was the period in which nothing was done well; that houses were ugly, and crockery uglier; that nobody could either sing or paint; and that women were going through that uncomfortable transition stage of education, in which they could neither play the piano nor make a pie.

All this has been reformed—indifferently perhaps, but yet reformed. With samplers and Poonah-painting has vanished a great mass of ignorance and slipshod half-knowledge. Attempts are now made to teach how to play the piano and make a pie upon scientific principles, and, thanks to South Kensington, our girls promise to develop into a nation of artists. As a type of the young lady of artistic aspirations, let us consider Miss Margery Daw—a tall damsel, comely to look upon, and endowed with a fine, frank, easy manner, as captivating as it is well-bred. This manner is disseminated rather freely among our girls, and arises in great measure from an accurate imitation of that prevailing in high places. When I address you, my dear madam, on the subject of our girls, I intend to be understood as signifying the daughters of persons of the middle class, with incomes ranging from five hundred to five thousand a year. Young persons in this sphere of life were, in times not very remote from our own, frequently bashful and of a retiring, nay shy, disposition. It was not till they became

married, and possessed of a forest of olive-branches, that they acquired the confidence and power of self-assertion proper to the English female. They flirted at times, but in a very feeble, purposeless kind of way. A species of flabbiness affected their mental structure. They knew nothing of dates; they confounded names and events, countries and dishes. When they quoted a line they invariably made a blunder, and not unfrequently related instances of their absence of mind—otherwise idiocy—as good jokes. Absence of mind has, by-the-way, gone out of fashion among other affectations of laziness and incompetence, but there are yet among us mothers of families whose girlhood was passed in the slipshod period, and who could not do a sum in each of the four rules of arithmetic to save their families from bankruptcy. When young, these substantial matrons, unlikely as it may now appear, were shy in their manner. If spoken to by a handsome man they were apt to become confused, and at times they were known to blush. All this wretched incompleteness of character arose from the lack of proper study of those higher in rank than themselves. Since the not very remote day when the servant declared that a visitor, who had called during his mistress's absence, must be a "lady of quality, for she swore so roundly," the English grande dame has ever been remarkable for her self-possession and perfect confidence under the most trying circumstances. Not fifty years ago it was easy to distinguish "the quality" from the wealthy bourgeoisie. Tone, carriage, and manner, all were distinctive, and it was not till the great fortunes of thousands of self-made men placed their daughters almost on the same level as highly-born damsels, that they dared to copy high-born manners.

I would not for a moment profanely suppose that wealth and culture can confer the privileges of strawberry leaves. To hint at such a thing would be to confess oneself un-English as well as untruthful. Wealth and culture, especially the former, are very good things, but on the whole birth is perhaps in England the best estate—if with a little money, so much the better. "Birth," cries Major Pendennis, "I like birth; but, damme, sir, I like a brewery that brings in fourteen thousand a year." It is this spirit of the immortal major which has brought about the great reform in the manner and, as it is vulgarly called, "style," of middle-class girls. Faded purple does

well enough to be born in, but, for the purpose of living in, it requires a dip in the dyer's vat; or the brewer's will do nearly as well. Quickly-acquired wealth has caused a general levelling up of society. Strawberry leaves have intertwined kindly with hops, ermine with cotton, genealogies with invoices, until the blessed privilege of lofty manner has descended to the wives of clergymen and the daughters of barristers.

All this time we have figuratively—I know myself better than to do so actually—been keeping Miss Margery Daw waiting on the threshold. It would be a delusion to suppose that she enters a room. She is not one of the soft, gliding creatures invented by novelists, and supposed to steal into the heart as into the presence of the hero. Miss Daw bursts upon you at once, like a well-trained hurricane. She is expansive, eloquent of voice and of gesture—were I quite sure that the remark would not cost me my life, I would say that she is noisy. Yet there is nothing about her to which exception can be taken. She speaks good English with an elegant pronunciation. She is perfectly fresh and frank, and has a habit of saying what she thinks; which, charming as it is now, augurs ill for the man destined one day to call this thing of brightness his own. She is this morning clad in enthusiasm, and dark green of the hue known as Morris green. Her figure, very tall, slight, and elegant, is freely shown through the tight robe actually strained over it; her fair hair is not laid smoothly in any intelligible order, but suggests that it has been brushed in opposite directions by insane ladies'-maids. A Rubens hat of astounding grandeur of conception crowns this startling figure. Miss Daw is armed with a book of sketches, and has just come from Heatherley's or the Slade School of Art, I forget which. She is full of art and artistic talk—that is to say, of art of one kind. Her yearnings towards music and poesy are of a very mild nature, as compared with her enthusiasm for the arts plastic and pictorial. Miss Margery Daw has made good progress in both of the latter. She has thrust aside painting on pottery with scorn and derision, she has advanced from water-colours to oils, draws and models in the life school. Whether she will become a second Rosa Bonheur remains to be seen. Probably, as she has both beauty and money, she will marry a broad-acred squire and hunt three days a week in the season;

but wherever she may go, her artistic instincts will go with her. This type of girl has been greatly on the increase since the death of fancy work—a species of industry which produced, at great expense of time and money, a large number of entirely useless and worthless articles. Our artistic girls are by no means free from the taint of æsthetic cant, and plunge into the mysteries of decoration with unflinching courage. Ranged on opposite sides, they debate with much vivacity and at great length the respective merits of the systems now in vogue, including the style known as “decoration by pot,” in which everything is considered with reference to the employment of blue and white china. The artistic girl is very proud of knowing distinguished painters. She talks freely to and of them, and has views as to their method of work; but the summit of her ambition is reached when Stodge, R.A., or Scumble, A.R.A., introduces her portrait into an Academy picture with a catching title, such as “Ask Papa,” “The Mitten,” “At Last,” and so forth. Then she is supremely happy, and having sworn the artist to secrecy, quietly tells Jawleigh, who is “connected with the press,” all about the matter, knowing, the sly puss, that the world will certainly be informed of her identity with Stodge’s or Scumble’s model.

Miss Harley Crichton is of another complexion from the artistic girl, and owes her existence to what may be called the racing theory of education. She burns with the ambition to be thought clever “all round”—good at all points—history, mathematics, French, German, Latin, English literature and composition, drawing, music, and Greek. She is especially proud of her Greek, and from her intellectual eminence looks down scornfully on girls who know not that language. Greek and mathematics are the fashion just now; every girl learns Latin and modern languages as a matter of course, but the final gloss of elegance can only be communicated by a knowledge of ancient Greek. It is a little difficult to decide how far Miss Crichton’s industry is promoted by a genuine love of the polite arts, and how far by the racing spirit. It is only reasonable to suppose that the latter is at least as strong as the former, as she frames her system of study with distinct reference to the passing of examinations. She is minutely acquainted with the conditions of the Oxford and Cambridge examinations, and toils diligently

at the books specially written for coaching purposes; and, moreover, either engages a coach of her own or goes halves in one with a friend. The coach impresses on her the necessity of knowing exactly the portions of subjects set for examination, without giving the slightest attention to any general view of them. The object appears to be not so much the acquirement of knowledge, properly so called, as a parrot-like facility in certain of its departments. Certain books of the Old and New Testaments are studied with painful minuteness; while the preceding and succeeding books remain almost or quite unknown. English history is also learned almost by rote, so far as certain sections are concerned, while the events of the last fifty years are ignored. To the lay mind it may appear that a perfect knowledge of European history since the French Revolution is of vast importance; but this view is evidently not shared by the teachers of youth, who are strangely interested in the Saxons and Normans, and rarely succeed in bringing Miss Crichton’s historical knowledge down to the reign of Queen Victoria. The perpetual struggle in examination produces a curious but not unnatural effect on Miss Crichton’s mind, and renders that organ an interesting study. She knows all about the Battle of Pharsalia and the crossing of the Rubicon; she can stand unshaken the closest questioning as to the order of the judges in Israel; she can tell all about the Council of Trent and the Peace of Westphalia; but she is not clear as to the date of the Battle of Meane; nor can she repeat the names of the governor-generals of India, explain the meaning of a concordat, or recite the leading clauses of the Treaty of Paris. Much of her historic lore, too, is learned from neat little manuals, with the facts connected by a narrative absolutely devoid of any human interest. This method, in some measure, explains why she never reads round a subject—the vehicle by which it is conveyed acts as a certain repellent. In her leisure moments Miss Crichton reads poetry, but professes a contempt for prose fiction. To her super-fine mind the ordinary three-volume novel appears unworthy of notice, and she prefers the intellectual exercise of endeavouring to understand Mr. Tennyson’s earlier and Mr. Browning’s later works to the study of warmly-tinted pictures of lady novelists. The studious girl is very anxious to be thought studious, and, like

the artistic girl, affects a peculiar costume. In raiment she is less "rag-dolly" than Miss Daw, dressing with as much elegance as the prevailing fashion will admit of. Her costume, however, has its peculiarities. I would not go so far as to say that every lady who wears her hair cut short and curled, à la bébé, is a studious girl; but I will say that almost every genuine female Crichton does wear her capillary attractions in that fashion. In extreme cases, when Greek and mathematics have set in with unusual severity, the short hair and grey eyes are set off by an eye-glass of the pince-nez order of architecture. Very pretty and piquant, indeed, is Miss Crichton, with her small head rising out of an Eton collar, and her studious habits hardly appear to have had that evil effect upon her health, of which we have heard a great deal of late. I fear Miss Crichton has not much sympathy for those who break down in the race for marks. Questioned on this point, her answer is prompt: "It is the dull girls who break down, not those who have any pretension to a place in the front rank. Hard work agrees with my friends very well. Many of them have taken the A.A. and B.A. of the University of London—degrees requiring far more work than the senior Cambridge some people make an outcry about, but they are all very well in health, most of them are good-looking, and I am sure enjoy it all very much. If you insist on cross-examining me, I do know of one case of a girl winning a scholarship, and then having a fever, and losing all benefit of her prize. This is the only case I have heard of a girl of fair capacity breaking down. Plenty of stupid girls fret themselves into illness; but I suppose it is foolish to allow them to compete." If this is not genuine cross-country "form," I do not know what is. "Devil take the hindmost;" "Let the weakest go to the wall;" "The pace is too good to enquire;" and a few more sentences of this kind, should, I take it, be written in letters of gold in the class-rooms of the colleges devoted to the higher education of women.

Very different from Miss Crichton is Miss Cutmore. She is a dark-haired girl, with bright bead-like eyes, and a prominent forehead, with hair pushed back from it. She wears a black deer-stalker hat, a single eye-glass, and black raiment, destitute of ornament or trimming, panier or trail. Unlike the great majority of our girls, she wears thick boots, with heels

several inches lower than those in common use. She clearly looks upon life as a serious matter—at least until she shall have taken her degree, and is altogether a young person of a resolute turn of mind. Naturally, she looks down upon girls who spend their time in acquiring merely ornamental learning, and has defined opinions on the germ theory of disease and other savoury subjects. She is a highly meritorious girl, matter-of-fact, not to say stern, beyond her years, but thoroughly sensible, and fully impressed with the responsibilities of existence.

It is far otherwise with Miss Beethoven Tinkler, who loves no art but that which affords the most frequent opportunity for display. To her gentle, sympathetic nature, music alone has charms, and to its cultivation she devotes all her energy. It is a peculiarity of the musical girl, that she is fond of wearing spectacles, and through these useful instruments sees nothing in the world but musical notes. To her, history, philosophy, philology, and geology only represent the music of the spheres played out of tune. When she is not producing music herself, or listening to that produced by others, she is talking about it. Does she know Captain Bellows? "Oh yes, a charming voice; he sings up to A from the chest." Does she like Miss Van Triller? "Oh yes, so much, a lovely soprano, very strong and sweet in the middle register." This is all she seems to know about anybody. To her a fellow-creature is almost literally "vox pretereæ nihil." Of inoffensive creatures who neither play nor sing, she neither knows nor cares to know anything. It is only the possession of a beautiful voice, or rare skill on some musical instrument, that has any claim upon her acquaintance. She is very elegant and fashionable in dress and manner, music and spectacles being her sole peculiarities, and is the admiration of her fond mother, and the delight of the social circle in which she moves. There are numerous other types among Our Girls: notably, the girl who rides to hounds; the girl who walks with the guns; the girl who fishes; the girls who yacht, and row, and swim. There is also the charitable girl, and the girl who devotes her life to nursing; but the curtain which hangs over their gentle lives should not be drawn by a careless or irreverent hand.

Our Boys would do well to consider what manner of mates be these now growing up for them, and whether an early man-

hood spent at billiards is likely to qualify them as fitting husbands for any of the superior young persons I have endeavoured to sketch. It would be awkward to be pulled up as to a date by one's wife; and downright disagreeable to see oneself, as a Briton, reduced to the condition of American husbands, whose wives rule them—by virtue, be it said, of superior culture, and very much for their own good—with a rod of iron.

AMONG THE RUINS.

A VOICE amidst grey ruins clearly singing,
While lengthening shadows o'er the sand-flats fall,
And a wan moon like a white pall is flinging
A sad and sombre lustre over all.

What burthen bath that song which might enthrall
The desert ghouls to listening mutely glad?

What meaning bears its message musical?—

"While life hath love, shall song be wholly sad?"

Hist! Are there roses 'midst those ruins springing?

Is that the nightingale's voluptuous call?

Can it be dew on those scant grass-tufts stringing,

In the chill moonlight, gems imperial?

Ah, nay! But while snake-slow the shadows crawl

From mound to mound with perished verdure clad,

Still sounds that voice with joyous swell and fall—

"While life hath love, shall song be wholly sad?"

What voice? None knows. That rapturous carol
ringing

From forth the ruins hath no name at all;

But not the lark through the sheer blue upwinging

Hath song so clear or so ecstatical.

Shapes of delight, odours ambrosial

Rise in the desert, and its spectres sad

Shrink to their lairs, and may no more appal.

"While life hath love, shall song be wholly sad?"

Who hears that voice is never Sorrow's thrall,

'Midst wastes with shadows thronged, with ruins
clad;

'Tis as an echo of Hope's clarion call—

"While life hath love, shall song be wholly sad?"

A QUIET HONEYMOON.

"WHERE shall we spend our honeymoon, dear?"

I look up from the mat where I am basking in front of the fire, I take one look at the pretty-shaped, curl-crowned head, and the neat and dainty little figure, and reply with much enthusiasm, "Anywhere you like, darling."

"It mustn't be Hastings, or Scarborough, or Brighton, or Paris," she goes on, looking down at me with a grave expression on her dear face.

Jingling together a few coins in one of my pockets, I reply decisively, "No; it mustn't." For I don't make very much money as an artist. Canvas and colours are so expensive.

Without another word she unfolds a railway map of England, and spreads it on

the mat before me. "There!" she exclaims in a tone of triumph. "Now we'll just find some quiet and secluded spot—'far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,' you know—and we'll have a nice, quiet honeymoon, and spend a happy fortnight together. It will be cheap, and we shall be happy."

"Yes," I reply, rather dubiously it must be confessed, "but do you think, Rose, that your love for me is strong enough to bear a fortnight of complete seclusion? Pardon my saying so, but don't you think we should get rather bored?"

"Jack!" in a tone of reproach. "If you ever dare to hint at such a thing, I'll never speak to you again!" A true woman's threat, which must have been made some millions of times, though there is no authentic record of any case in which it was ever carried out. She puts her little finger on a small village in the extreme north of Cumberland, entirely out of the Lake district, and evidently at least eight miles from any railway-station, and says with decision, "We'll go there!"

I reply, still dubiously, "Very well; if you think, my darling——" The rest of the sentence is lost amid certain sounds of an osculatory character, but the matter is settled—we are to spend our quiet honeymoon in the secluded and appropriately named village of Kissington.

It was a raw and chill September day when my wife and I arrived at Mugglethorpe, Cumberland, the nearest station to Kissington. We shot out our luggage—two trunks, a hat-box, and a bonnet-box—on to the platform, and looked round. There we stood together, six feet of laziness and incapacity in a brown velvet coat and tweed inexpressibles, and the brightest and best little lady in the world, warmly wrapped up in a tweed ulster. How charming she looked, with her pretty, pale face surmounted by a coquettish straw hat, trimmed with golden corn and poppies! A sour-visaged old gentleman had travelled with us all the way from London, and had glared at us through his spectacles whenever we spoke to each other; so it was not with the kindest feelings towards old gentlemen in general, and that old gentleman in particular, that I stood and surveyed the scene. A wretched little shed of a station, almost completely shut in by frowning black hills; an ancient, wheezy porter, who looked up at us and gave a savage growl as he passed leisurely on his

way; and one dirty cottage just outside the station gate, bearing a legend painted in white letters on a narrow black board, setting forth that Jonas Kitson was "licensed to sell beer and tobacco to be drunk on the premises." It was not an inspiring view after our journey, and I may, perhaps, be pardoned if I gave vent to a hasty expression. The train had started on its northward way, and as the old porter did not seem as if he intended to take any further notice of us, it behoved me to go after him and shout—which I did, lustily. But the old man either couldn't or wouldn't understand that we wanted to go to Kissington, and I was in despair. I am inclined to believe it was a case of "wouldn't," for the sight of a shilling brightened him up wonderfully, and he immediately said, "Oh, aye." Could we get to Kissington—was there any conveyance? I asked. Well, no there wasn't, but Dick Thoms was going to drive over in half an hour, and he'd very likely give us a lift. So we waited for Dick Thoms.

"You must remember, Rose," I said to my darling, who was almost ready to cry, "this isn't Kissington. It's only Mugglethorpe. Kissington may be rather a jolly place, you know." But though I rather pride myself on possessing that peculiar form of human philosophy which has its Ultima Thule in the expression, "What's the odds, so long as you're happy?" I am afraid that, after all, I made a very poor comforter.

After the lapse of an hour, during which time we had been stamping up and down the platform together, Dick Thoms duly made his appearance, introduced by the porter. Dick Thoms proved to be a burly Cumberland giant, of decidedly agricultural appearance. Yes, he would give us a lift with pleasure—he was always ready to oblige. So we went out into the road to enter our conveyance. What did we see? A large, ramshackle cart, the body of which was covered by network. Looking into the network, I found there were to be other passengers—an old sow and a litter of small pigs. I turned to my wife and said, "Rose, far be it from me to destroy any hope you may have raised of riding to Kissington, but seeing that all that space beside the driver will be occupied by our luggage, we have only two alternatives—we must either ride among the pigs, or walk."

Rose gave a visible shudder, and said directly, "Oh, I'll walk, please."

This seemed an excellent joke to Dick Thoms. He slapped his thigh, and roared heartily. "Why, don't 'ee be frightened, ma'am!" he shouted in his deep Cumberland voice. "They're quite quiet—they won't hurt ye!"

But Rose was firm; she would not ride with the pigs. So Dick Thoms, after roaring again, and slapping his thigh with much heartiness, lifted up our heavy trunks as though they had been feathers, sprang up to his place at the front of the cart, gave us a broad grin and a nod, and with a grunt of displeasure from the sow, and a squeal from one of the diminutive members of her family, the cart rumbled off, leaving us together on the road.

We set out manfully—and womanfully, which is better still—to cover those eight miles of hilly country on foot. It rained once or twice, of course—that was to be expected—and the bleak hills looked more frowning than ever under a funereal canopy of black clouds. Presently the aspect of the country began to change, and in place of the mountains we had a long level stretch of agricultural land. Just when we were believing that we had walked sixteen miles at the very least, and were seriously thinking about giving up the struggle, we came upon Kissington at an unexpected turn in the road—a long, straggling, dead-alive sort of village, with an old church at one end of the green, a pump in the centre, and about a hundred and fifty small tumble-down houses and cottages scattered around, without any pretence at order or arrangement. This was the death-blow to all our hopes, and so utterly forlorn and wretched was the appearance of the place, that two big tears began to course slowly down my darling's cheeks. I tried to console her again. "Come, don't cry, Rose," I said tenderly. "Remember that I am here, and you know what love can do—it can transform a shed into a palace; it can gild—Hang it! don't make an exhibition of yourself before people!"

She turned and looked me in the face somewhat angrily, resolutely brushed her tears away with her cambric, and in a moment was her own brave self again.

We walked down the village street, the centre of a wondering if not admiring crowd. The people came to their doors and stood open-mouthed as we passed, as though wondering—and not, it must be confessed, without cause—what on earth

could bring anybody to Kissington. Half-way down the street we came upon Dick Thom's cart, and, judging from appearances, he had shot its entire contents unceremoniously into the road. The pigs were mixed up heterogeneously with our luggage, my wife's bonnet-box was smashed, and one of the juvenile pigs, evidently seized with a desire to closely study the latest Paris fashions, was poking his nose into the broken box and its delicate contents. Rose did not cry now—hers was a grief too deep for tears. She gave the pig a perfectly savage thrust with her parasol which sent him squealing away, and rescued her treasure.

"Now," I said with a sigh of relief, "now for the hotel. Come here, my man"—this to a yokel in a smock-frock and Brobdingnagian boots. "Where's the hotel?"

The rustic stared hard for a moment and scratched his head.

"Where's the hotel?" I repeated, somewhat sharply. "The hotel—the inn."

"The inn!" replied the rustic, with a gleam of intelligence. "Well, there bean't no inn, but there's two beershops."

"Two beershops!" I was perfectly savage by this time, but I wouldn't let my wife see it. "That's the way they have of talking here, you know," I whispered to her reassuringly. "Beershops—large old-fashioned places, clean and comfortable, chimney corners, sanded floors, hams and sides of bacon hanging from the rafters, lots of cream and fresh eggs, and—and all that sort of thing."

Leaving the luggage temporarily to its fate, with the exception of the bonnet-box, which Rose insisted on carrying with her, we made our way to the first of the beershops. It was a second and dirtier edition of the one we had seen at Mugglethorpe, it smelt horribly of stale beer and tobacco, and was filled with ploughmen and other persons connected with the agricultural interest. Keeping up our spirits with difficulty, we visited the second at the other side of the village, and found it to be the worst of the three. What was to be done? Well, we learnt at last that one Mrs. Diggles had two spare rooms in her cottage, and probably wouldn't mind letting us have them, only we should have to "find ourselves." Our first care was to find ourselves under a roof, so we didn't mind the condition, but closed at once with Mrs. Diggles, an elderly person with asthmatic tendencies.

"And really the rent is very low," Rose whispered to me, sotto voce; "it'll be so much cheaper than an hotel." We wondered, however, how Mrs. Diggles could possibly manage to spare her spare rooms, for she had a large husband, a large family, and a cottage which was as small as they were large, and dirty beyond description.

"Now I shall have a chance of showing my housekeeping powers," said Rose, triumphantly. "I'm sure you must be hungry, you poor boy; you go and send up the luggage and have a look round at the scenery, and I'll have a nice, substantial tea ready by the time you come back."

I went out as directed, engaged two rustics to carry up the trunks, and took a walk round the village. On my way home I saw Rose looking despondently into a little shed with an opening in front about four feet square. On a board two gory and shapeless masses of meat were placed, and on these her gaze was fixed. She looked charmingly miserable.

"What's this?" I asked, coming up behind her.

"This!" she repeated, with a forced little laugh, "oh! this is the butcher's. This is all the meat there is, but I've quite fascinated the butcher, and he says his boy will be home directly from a country round, and we can have anything there is left."

"Oh, indeed!" I replied sarcastically.

"Yes," said Rose, gazing with a far-off expression down the road, evidently in a vain search for the butcher's boy. "Well, you've seen the scenery, Jack dear. What is it like on that side?"

"Oh, it's all right," I replied, with assumed cheerfulness. "Fields and cows."

"Yes," said Rose, nodding approval. "And what's it like on the other side?"

"Oh, well," I answered, "much the same thing—cows and fields. It's a Sidney Cooperish sort of country altogether."

After waiting some considerable time, with nothing but the two pieces of meat to look at, we gave up all hopes of the butcher's boy, for that day at least, so we moved towards the only other visible shop in the village. In this establishment every conceivable article was sold, from boots and hosiery to groceries—I fancy, too, I saw a coffin under the counter. Here we were so fortunate as to obtain some tea, a small loaf of bread, a fragment of rusty bacon, and—balm of Gilead!—the one solitary box of sardines in the

shop. With these materials we made rather a jolly tea, and our spirits went up wonderfully.

The next morning I sallied out with my wife on a marketing expedition. Our first call was at the butcher's, which we found in exactly the same condition as we had left it on the previous evening. There were the same two gory slabs of meat on the block, and nothing in the world besides. "We shall starve if we stay here," she said bitterly. However, she had evidently got to the blind side of the butcher—she would get to the blind side of anybody—and that worthy solemnly produced, with an air of much mystery, a couple of fat chops. We carried off the chops, and went on our way rejoicing. We next stopped at a cart in the street, the vehicle being about half filled with potatoes. "This is the greengrocer's," was whispered to me confidentially. Some potatoes soon joined the chops in the large market-basket we had borrowed from Mrs. Diggles. "Now then for the chemist's," said Rose.

"The what?" I demanded. "We're not going to eat drugs for dinner."

"Don't be impatient. You'll see."

We found the chemist's in a side street, and after my darling had been in converse with the chemist himself for about ten minutes, she emerged, bearing with her one tin containing solidified ox-tail soup and another containing lobster.

"There!" she cried. "Who said we should starve?"

"Why, you did; only we shan't with such a clever little girl as yourself at the head of affairs."

We had quite a glorious dinner that day, and a similar one the next; but this sort of thing soon became terribly monotonous. There was nothing to do, and nothing whatever to see. Everybody in the place used to go to bed about nine o'clock, rising with the birds about four the next morning. Once Rose and I ventured to stay up till eleven o'clock, chatting and reading by the light of a solitary tallow candle; but Mrs. Diggles made her appearance early the following morning, and with some asperity declared that she wouldn't have such "goings on" in her house. Under these circumstances it was not to be wondered at that we should both get cross and irritable, and say spiteful things to each other sometimes; but Rose wouldn't confess that her plan had proved a complete and cruel failure.

"There's so much to do in the country,"

she would say. "Why don't you go out and sketch?" To which question I had a perfect answer. "I should be happy to do so, only unfortunately there's nothing to sketch."

"Then why don't you go and smoke?" My reply to this was equally severe. "I've no tobacco left, and I can't get anything fit for a Christian to smoke in this hole."

"Then why don't you go out and look at the scenery?" I flatter myself that my reply to this last suggestion was the most crushing of all. "Speaking as an artist, Rose, I should say that cattle-pieces were rather good things than otherwise, but if a man has a gallery entirely filled with them he is apt to get—not to put too fine a point on it—bored to death."

"So he is," said Rose, with a weary sigh. "It is a little slow, isn't it?"

I replied with terrible and gloomy emphasis, "It is." Still she wouldn't give way, and when I asked whether she wasn't tired of Kissington she wouldn't give me a direct reply, but said, "Oh, it's so nice and quiet, and so very cheap."

I guessed that the feminine mind couldn't stand for long absolute banishment from companions of her own sex. I knew that if a woman had no dresses to criticise, no shops to look at, and no one to exchange small talk with, she would very soon capitulate. I was biding my time, and the result proved that I was correct in my surmises. One wet evening, when we had been pent up in the stuffy little sitting-room for four hours, had looked till we were tired at all the highly-coloured scriptural prints, all the cheap china ornaments, and all the black-edged memorial cards in the room, and had exhausted every possible subject of conversation, Rose suddenly burst into tears, threw her arms round my neck, and exclaimed:

"Oh, Jack! do take me away. I shall die if I stop in this dreadful place."

"Very well, my poor child," I replied, tenderly. "But I thought you said your love was so strong that it would stand anything."

"So it would," she said ruefully. "Anything but this. I didn't bargain for this."

"Pardon me, it was your suggestion."

"Yes," looking archly at me through her tears, "but we weren't married then."

"By George, no more we were! And if we've got on so well together in this dismal place, and after you have shown that you can make a dinner out of the most

unpromising materials, what will our lives be like when we get back to town?"

Her reply was brief and characteristic. "We'll take the first train from Mugglethorpe to-morrow and see."

And we did. But if I got married fifty times—which Rose says is, thank goodness, an impossibility in England—there should be no more "quiet honeymoons" for me.

WHIMSICAL IDEAS, SANITARY AND OTHERWISE.

FEW things are more noticeable than the changes in public opinion on matters of food, domestic economy, and health-preserving. At a time like the present, when domestic improvements occupy so large a share of general attention, and when the teachings of scientific chemistry are brought into the domains of everyday life, it is useful as well as amusing to look back a few generations and examine the notions prevalent among our grandfathers' grandfathers on these topics.

We have before us a small book, published about a hundred and thirty years ago, written by one who claims the appellation of a "Social Improver," evidently an observer of things as they then were. It will be found that there is much of a curious nature in this picture of middle-class English society in the days of Roderick Random, Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, and Peregrine Pickle.

The science of chemistry was, of course, very little known to the public in those times. To explain the preference for river water over spring water, our author reasons thus: "River water hath the advantage of running through various sorts of earth, by which it sucks into itself a fat, oily, and saline quality, which the surface of the earth doth plentifully afford. This also is the cause of all vegetation; and the lovely green colour with which all vegetables are clothed doth arise from the saline quality. For this reason, river water will brew, boil, and wash, and is more profitable in all cases of housewifery than spring or pump water." Closely akin to this is our author's philosophy of milk in its action on the human system: "Milk is a mild and most friendly food to nature, very fit and profitable for all ages and complexions. If it do not agree with some people, it is because their stomachs are made sharp and sour by superfluity of dainty food, and the continued use of

strong drinks"—some truth here, though oddly set forth.

Butchers' meat becomes tainted more quickly in hot weather than in cold, as we all know. Our Social Improver's mode of explaining the fact is very naïve: "We must not kill meat in autumn. In this season the sun, which is the true life and power of all things, declines; all sorts of herbage, the food of all beasts that are generally eaten, doth the same; and the grass is fraught with a gross phlegmatic matter. Besides, it is a faintish hot time; the air, which is the cherishing life of all things, is more gross and full of humidity than at any other season. The spirits of all sorts of creatures are also weak."

The word "spirits," we may remark, was used in a singularly vague way before the rise of scientific chemistry. It denoted a mysterious something which eluded farther search. Listen to the following philosophy of the inferiority of salt meat if not salted quickly after the slaughtering: "The meat does certainly lose its pure spirituous quality; so that the body becomes heavy, gross, and dull. Do not the life and spirits of most sorts of meat waste and evaporate by keeping, if there be not a proper way of preparation used? Salt will not preserve flesh from putrefaction any longer than the virtue and power of the spirits do continue. Salt does not destroy nor purge the flesh from corruption, but incorporates itself with the essential spirits; and these do, as it were, tie or hold the corrupt parts captive, till the spirit and life of the flesh be spent and wasted, and then the flesh falls into putrefaction."

Our philosopher, who evidently attached more value to vegetable food than to animal, praises it because it is cleaner. "All kinds of animals are subject to various passions and humours. All or most vegetables, on the contrary, have a more simple and innocent origin; therefore, their operation on the body and senses is as simple, having no power to awaken any property in the body, but what is like themselves." A sort of union of two forces, chemical affinity and spiritualistic sympathy.

As concerns cookery, a notable bit of chemistry relating to spirits is set forth: "The vessel in which your food is boiled ought to be uncovered all the time of boiling; for, if the air hath not its free egress and regress, the pure spirits in the food become, as it were, suffocated; and then

the food so prepared becomes dull and heavy. Air is the essential life of the spirits, and all food that hath not plenty of water and the free influence of the air in its preparation, does certainly lose its natural colour, pure smell, and taste." There is truth here; albeit the reasons assigned are not such as would pass muster among the Liebig and Franklands.

The argument in favour of moderation in the degree to which meat is cooked, introduces us once again to the "spirits." "It is much better that food should be a little under prepared than too much. For, when the gross phlegmatic body of any food is by preparation digested, then presently the lively spirituous quality is set at liberty; whence does proceed a most pleasant smell and taste, which pleasant quality before the preparation lay hid or captive in the body of phlegm. But so soon as this phlegmatic body is in part destroyed, the spirit becomes volatile; and then, if the preparation be continued, those pure spirits do either become suffocated or evaporate; and then the sweet balsamic body turns as it were sour. For these reasons, all sorts of food, either over prepared or twice prepared, are of a strong fulsome taste and smell." *Mem. Materfamilias* must not hash the cold mutton on the second day.

The best regimen for children does not escape the ken of this domestic philosopher. He talks to mothers in the following strain: "I pity the young children most, who are of so tender and delicate nature, both in their bodies and spirits, that any discords wound them to the very heart. Nothing is more grateful and refreshing to them than the pleasant air; it comforts their spirits, causes a fine circulation of the blood and radial moisture, begets appetite, and makes them grow in strength. On the contrary, hot sulphurous airs, with great fires and warm clothing, not only hinder the circulation of the blood, but suffocate the spirits, and destroy the appetite." Some good sense here, despite a little crotchety theorising.

Our author condemns strong alcoholic drinks. He speaks of the "cruel harsh fires" of the distilling apparatus, whereby "the pure spirit, or sweet body, which is the root of motion and fermentation, is totally destroyed. . . . You may put what quantity of sugar you will to brandy, rum, or any other distilled spirit; it will still contain a strong fire, devoid of motion or fermentation." That brandy and rum will not ferment by merely adding sugar

to them is perfectly true; but Pasteur and Tyndall would be rather staggered by this theory of fermentation.

Women are spoken of as if they then smoked tobacco more abundantly than is usual among the sex at present. "It hath become frequent for women, not only to drink brandy, but also to smoke tobacco; which two things have a great difficulty. Tobacco is an herb of Mars and Saturn, having its fiery quality from Mars, and its poisonous attractive nature from Saturn. The common use of it in pipes is very injurious to all sorts of people, more especially to the female sex."

When treating of houses, rooms, and furniture, the writer supplies additional proofs of the vague use of the word "spirit," at a time when science had not yet settled the leading principles of sanitary economy. Say that impure air attacks persons in weak health, then we are told that, "if it is not withstood by the central heat and power of the spirits, then this evil vapour doth seize the spirits, and incorporate itself with its likeness." For (and here comes a curious bit on spirit-affinity) "every particular thing does sensibly and powerfully seek out its likeness; and wheresoever it finds its simile, it hath power to incorporate it."

The advice given for the airing of bedrooms leads us to believe that ventilation was but little attended to in those days. "You ought to set up all sorts of beds as near as you can to the most airy part of the room, exposing them to the air the most part of the day. In the night you ought not to have your curtains drawn about your bed, for it hinders the sweet, refreshing influence of the air." Carpets, druggets, floor-cloth, and matting were almost unknown then as bedroom floor-coverings; the wooden boards were bare, and the tidy housewife is enjoined to wash them frequently.

But a well-aired bedroom is not alone sufficient; the bed itself comes under the notice of our critic. Even if folks supply fresh air and fresh washing to the apartment, "it will be bad when beds have not been changed nor hardly used for several years"—very bad, if true. "Would not anyone condemn a man if he should wear a shirt a year, and lie in the same sheets seven years? Which, if anyone should do, it would not either endanger his health or bring half the inconveniences to his body, that old uncleaned feather-beds will do." Feathers were, it would appear, much

out of favour with this sanitarian. The general knowledge of the science of health in those times was assuredly scanty, for he attributed to "an unclean, putrefied matter" which belongs naturally to all feathers, the generation of those numerous little brown creatures which so sorely try the patience of tidy housewives, and which are occasionally mentioned to ears polite under the euphonious designation of B flat. We are led to believe that under-sheets were not much used, that the sleepers lay on the ticking of the bed, and that this ticking is meant when advice is given that "all sorts of beds, especially feather-beds, ought to be changed or washed three times a year; else it is impossible to keep them clean and sweet."

Chaff stuffing for beds is treated with more favour. "The certain means and ways, not only to prevent vermin, but also to preserve health and strength, are straw or rather chaff beds, with ticks of canvas, and quilts made of wool or flock to lay on them—certainly the most easy and pleasant lodging that can be invented. A little custom will make it appear friendly to nature, and in every respect far beyond the softest feather-beds, on which, when a man lies down, he sinks into them as into a hole, with banks rising on each side of him."

Trifling as many of these details may seem to be, and whimsical as some of the opinions unquestionably are, they have nevertheless a value in relation to the state of domestic and sanitary economy in the days of the second George. We can, to some extent, measure thereby the advance exhibited down to the reign of our gracious Victoria, that monarch's grandson's granddaughter.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANÇILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER III. OLD CLOTHES FOR NEW.

It was with a twice bitter heart, however, that Celia rose the next morning. Hope is in one thing strangely like despair, the keener it is overnight, the colder it grows in the light of the sun. Not that it was sunlight which was waking her. A grey cloud, half of mist and half of smoke, lay over the blackened roofs and among the chimney-pots that formed the sole prospect from her bed-

room window. The excitement of Comrie's visit had died out with her night-dreams, and she found herself face to face with a new day. Not of habit as at Deepweald, nor of life as at Lindenheim; but a day of which the whole aim and object was to save as many pence as possible.

Fortunately there was still food enough in the house to last them over the next two days. The wolf was heard howling, but not quite at the door. One day, bleak and bitter as it was, was gained for thinking, and that was something. In one more day there would be no time for thinking at all.

She ran over in her mind, while coming down from her attic, all she knew of the after-lives of her fellow-students in Saxony. What in the world had been the use of all her elaborate training, only for the purpose of doing her poor powers of justice to a dream and a delusion, as she was now more and more convinced that the great work had been from the beginning? And if so, promises must not keep her from being sane for two. But then how on earth was she to begin? London required teaching, no doubt; but she was as little en rapport with the profession as her father was with the theatrical audiences. And—were it otherwise—who would come to look for her in Saragossa-row?

When she came into the sitting-room, she heard her father's voice, in its calmest, deepest, and most solemn tones, addressing their landlady, the bakeress.

"I see from this account that we are in your debt, and that you wish to be paid. Of course you will be paid. I don't see why you should be so especially anxious to-day. Let me see, what is the amount? Twelve shillings and ninepence. Celia! Pay Mrs. Snow, and don't let me be disturbed. These people never know the damage they may do with their paltry concerns. If the score had not been finished; and even now, who can tell when a thing is finished? Never, any way, if one is to be troubled in this way."

Mrs. Snow was very far removed from being a virago, such as might be supposed to typify the keepers of lodgings in Saragossa-row. She was a small, light-complexioned widow, cleaner in person than her surroundings, with small mild features, some patches of silvery white in her hair, and eyes to which the tears seemed ready to start on the slightest provocation, or even with none at all,

and her voice, too, was mild. But there was a sharp sting in it as she answered, forgetful of her lodger's infirmity:

"These people! And paltry concerns! I don't know how you get your living, Mr. March, no, nor how Miss March gets hers; but I know how I get mine. It's by letting respectable rooms to respectable people. And my idea of respectfulness is people that pays their way. If I was rich, I'd take in as many as liked to come, and nothing to pay for board nor lodging—nor extras. So I must ask you to settle, if you please."

Celia's heart sank in her. Twelve shillings and ninepence! Was it possible? And not half the money in her purse, and even that forestalled. And yet how could she confess it, and how could she bring herself to face Mrs. Snow; a worse development of that unpromising day than even she had feared? It was the first time she had realised what money means, as none can till they learn what is meant by having none. Is it possible for one man to tell another what is meant by the first grinding crash of his life's boat against the granite of poverty? It sounds as heroic as a shipwreck; it may be so talked and written of as to seem absolutely sublime. Poverty, as we all know, is the nurse of genius, the mother of action, the sister of honesty, the wife of honour, the mistress of philosophy. Yes—but she keeps her heroics for the ears of those who hear of her. She speaks to those who hear her living voice in the stinging pipe of Mrs. Snow. Who ever felt in the land of romance when he owed twelve shillings and had only six wherewith to pay?

The organist, no doubt, had lost all account of money as he had of time. Since the score was finished, he was in a hundred ways, even in Celia's somewhat dull sight, a changed man. He seemed to have become so much one with his work that, when he had written "Finis," he had put the same infinite word to everything, and to have fallen into the posture of one whom nothing concerned any more. The doing of his work had represented time to him; its future, eternity. And eternity was not likely to trouble itself much with the daily dirt and dust, actual or metaphorical, of Saragossa-row.

But what was Celia to do? Rise to the occasion, of course—that is everybody's first duty; just as much as it is to have tact in one's dealings and presence of mind

in danger, and always to make wise plans and to compel them to prosper in the teeth of destiny. She took out her worn-out purse, a relic of Lindenheim, timidly.

"Mrs. Snow——"

The tears welled up into Mrs. Snow's eyes.

"I thought so, Miss March," she said shortly. "I knew I had only to speak a word——"

Instead of rising to the occasion, Celia only coloured crimson.

"Indeed," she said earnestly, "I didn't know—I thought I knew everything we owed—but I am so bad at sums. Here are six shillings; that is all we have, my father and I."

The tears did not go out of Mrs. Snow's eyes, but they flatly refused to fall, and one remained suspended half-way.

"You didn't know what you owed? And you're bad at summing? Then all I can say, and more I can't, is that it's lucky there's somebody that can. I daresay you'd do summing quick enough if there was somebody owed you money. There, you'd better try to add up this bill. It's right enough, but it'll be as good as a lesson. I've no patience with people that can waste their time over singing a parcel of songs, and don't know what they owe. Nobody ought to sing till they're debt free, say I. Catch me so much as whistling till I owed ne'er a penny. Not that I mean I'd whistle at any time, for I wouldn't, and it's low."

John March, as his manner was, turned his back on talk and took up a pen.

"I've known people before him," went on Mrs. Snow, raising her voice from soprano to treble, "and many, that wrote for their living; and I know it's to be done. A young man I had last year that wrote all the fires; and he did so well that it's my opinion he made 'em. Least-way, there never was so many after he went to New Zealand. But he never so much as set fire to my chimney. So I knows that it can be done. Why don't Mr. March go out and see the fires and the fits, and all like that, instead of poking in here over a desk? There isn't much to be seen out of the window, except the cats and the children; and there ain't much to write about them, I should say. And then there's Mr. Comrie. He's never been a day behind, and has a lot of books; and he don't pay his rent by sticking indoors, not he. He goes out and about, like a man; and I know it's

honest work he does, for he's never been a day behind with his week's rent since he was born—not that I knew him so little, for he's been a six-footer ever since he came to the Row; but the child's the father of a man, and you may be sure he was born punctual, and if he had to pay rent for his cradle 'twas paid. Yes, miss, for his cradle. There's many a poor woman hereabout that's glad to do it when she's out charing, or what not, and if you want to find lodging without rent you must take a coffin; I don't know of none other. So there!"

Celia sank below the situation farther and farther. She had never even seen such a thing as a quarrel. She could only half hold out her purse and wish wildly, like the helpless creature she was proving herself, for the presence of six feet of manhood, or even for Walter Gordon's share of them.

"My father is deaf," she said, as if his failure to run all over London in search of fires, or to commit arson for copy's sake, required apology.

"Ah, yes; deaf people can hear quick enough when they've got to be paid. But you're not deaf, Miss March. So you look here, if you please. It ain't my way to be too particular, but when there's young men in a house it's my duty to look after 'em; and young Mr. Comrie's as respectable as he's high. He was up here last night well-nigh two mortal hours. I was in bed, but I heard him going on; and I'm not going to see him lose money that he wants to pay his rent with, and keep respectable. What he may do out of doors is no concern of mine; but what's spent in my own doors comes to me, and in duty bound."

Celia set down her want of comprehension to fright, so far as she made any effort to comprehend anything but that she was expected to turn six shillings into twelve.

"No; I'm not particular. I don't ask anybody how they get their living so long as they pay their way. But when rent isn't paid up, then duty's duty, and I'd ask an angel out of heaven how he got his living, and if he didn't answer to satisfaction, I'd know the reason why. How does your father get his living, Miss March?"

"He is a musician—that is——"

"He don't play any music."

"He is deaf, and——"

"Ah, yes. None so deaf as those that won't pay. And how do you get your

living, miss, if I may be so bold? I've heard you singing, as I said before. Do you belong to the theatres?"

"No."

"I thought you might be a singing chambermaid out of a situation, that's all. But anyhow your father can't make much money by music if he don't play, nor you by singing if you only sing to your shadow. Shadows don't pay much, I reckon; or there'd be a fine pickings on a sunny day, and fat'd be a fine property. So, you aren't a singing chambermaid?"

"No."

"Then I say you ought to be. I mean to say you ought to be anything rather than let a widow wait for her money. Yes, miss—I know what I know; and what I say is, that a musician that's deaf and a young girl that don't do nothing must live somehow—for people must eat, even if their landladies is to starve; for it's a selfish world. And though I've noticed that landladies aren't by near and far up to lodgers in selfishness—I don't mean landlords of houses, for they think of nothing but their fixtures and their quarter-days—other people must eat too, even if they do happen to let lodgings. And therefore you don't get butchers' meat on trust, I know; and so the long and the short of it is, you and me part company, for I'm not going to have Mr. Comrie's morals come to hurt here; and I'm not going to keep lodgers that aren't straightforward; and I'm not going to be behind with my own rent, whatever you may be with yours. Therefore," she said plaintively, while the fountain of tears opened freely, "you'll take a week's notice from me; and, if you stay to the week's end, you'll please to do for yourselves."

So saying, she wiped her eyes and slammed the door. And none can slam doors so effectively as weeping women, who are small and mild. In a virago, it looks like nature; but in Mrs. Snow, it looked liked desperation.

Celia was fully aware that she had failed ignominiously to hold her own. No doubt Mrs. Snow had justice on her side, though she dealt it by hard measure. But still Justice, hard as her hands needs must be, need not be insulting. And what, she asked herself in despair, had Mr. Comrie's visit last night concerned Mrs. Snow? Neighbours had been neighbours, both at Deepweald and at Lindenheim. She had thought the young doctor as good-natured

as he was odd, and he had given her at least one night's dream of hope and courage. And yet, even she had a dim suspicion that had she been able to settle the bill off-hand, and given satisfactory proof that her purse had not run dry, Mr. Comrie might, if he pleased, visit her twenty times a day. Knowledge of the world was slow in coming, but it was likely to come quickly enough now. Poverty may be the mother of heroism, and all the rest of it, but she is, in her own person, knowledge of men. And of women? Possibly; but it may be doubted if there is such a thing anywhere.

She wrote:

"Mrs.—Snow—says—we—are—to—leave."

"Again?"

For some reason or other, they had already shifted quarters about a dozen times.

"What—are—we—to do?"

"Go elsewhere."

"We—have—only—six—shillings; we—owe—Mrs.—Snow—twelve."

John March looked down upon the great work; then up at Celia, and frowned with thought. The man seemed to have been relapsing into a mere machine, and to be incapable of such will, even as was needed to set the wheels of his mind moving. For five-and-twenty years his brain had been strung up to fever-point; and the loosened string meant reaction, which meant prostration. He had been thinking of one great thing for so long that, when he had to think of it no more, he had forgotten how to think of smaller things—for such were the common needs of life to the man who had lived for an idea.

"You mean we have no money?"

"None."

He filled his pipe carefully, lighted it, and sent out slow and vigorous clouds. He was in sober fact the man who starved because he owned a priceless diamond. That little room contained—if Mrs. Snow had only known it—the one great work of the century, the one man who could make it, and the one woman who could do it justice; so he still believed, for he at least believed in his own sanity, though all the world might conspire to call him madman. He tried to think; and though the thoughts came as slowly as the smoke-clouds, he, at least, was conscious of no less vigour in them, nor did it occur to him to draw closer comparisons between pipe and brain in the matter of cloud-compelling.

There were his kinsmen in Manchester. He had a moral claim on them; for had he not enriched them by his forfeiture of a share in the business, in order that he might hide himself abroad and marry a Roman beggar-girl? His sole inheritance had been the conventional shilling; and even that sum, hitherto unclaimed, would be welcome now, as a sop to the wolf at the door. But how could he, who had given up all things for Art's sake, go, beggar's cap in hand, to fat and prosperous relatives who—if they believed his identity—would surely tell him that as men sow, so they must reap, and as they make their beds, so must they lie. If a man will not be a rich man, he can hardly expect his relations to save him from being a poor one—and it was not in John March to say to a tradesman, "I have failed." And who would believe even that he was he? No—Andrew Gordon was fairly dead and buried, and must not be revived in men's eyes simply as a man who had been cut off with a shilling for a fool's marriage.

But for Celia's sake? No; not even for hers. She had no claim. Her very existence was a blunder; and though a fool may ask for help—unless he be a proud, and therefore a double fool—he can hardly make his follies a burden for others to bear. For once, a man would not make his children's sake an excuse for doing what he would not do for his own.

Nevertheless, he had brought her into the world. He did not sigh as he looked at her; one of his father's looms would have been incapable of sighing. But it had never occurred to him before that, when he had carried off the child from its mother, that he had been making himself answerable for something more than the tuning of a musical instrument. And he had time to look now, though his eyes were a little less clear than before they had devoured black dots and their tails day and night—and, yes; she had her mother's eyes—the eyes in which he had seen a voice five-and-twenty years ago. Would it have been better to have left her to the mother after all? It was his first weak thought; and it came with "No" for an answer.

Still, he had not trained her to starve. And what was he to do, deaf, prematurely old, with his life exhausted in one effort, and with no more knowledge of living men than a child? And what made his thoughts move like creaking doors?

In effect, the door actually creaked open.

"Mr. March," said Mrs. Snow, "here's a letter for the young lady."

Was she the same woman? The eyes were as ready to weep; indeed, they were actually brimming over. But she spoke gently, even pleasantly, for a voice in Saragossa-row, where tongues get spoiled by scolding. She held a letter in one corner of her apron, as if it had been brought by Mercury himself instead of the postman.

A letter for Celia? It was strange. Who should write to her? Bessy Gaveston might have done so; but then Bessy Gaveston had never heard of Saragossa-row.

Celia read it twice over; then she handed it to her father.

"Dear Miss March," he read, "I have a musical evening on Thursday. Pray oblige me by coming, and singing what you please. I particularly wish to renew our passing acquaintance at Hinchford.—Yours faithfully, A. QUORNE."

What could it possibly mean? It was from the countess, sure enough—it was dated from Park-lane, and bore a coronet on the cover. But how could Lady Quorne have heard of her, or remembered her, or cared for her? How could she have found her out in Saragossa-row, and why? It was a mystery beyond all ravelling.

John March frowned deeply. A week ago he would have said, "No." But he felt that his right to Celia's life had gone. He could not give her bread by way of Art's wages.

"You must go," he said roughly.

Celia looked at the note—desperately. It might mean doing something; it could do no harm. And she wanted somebody, anybody, in the shape of a friend. But, alas! there are more reasons than one for not being able to accept an invitation to humbler houses. Her father might bid her go, but a more powerful tyrant than he said, "No."

It was the cracked mirror over the empty fireplace; and it said to her what the cruel sisters said to Cinderella: "You go

to a ball? Why, you haven't even got a gown!"

John March frowned more deeply than ever; though it could not be supposed for an instant that such troubles were legible to his eyes. He left the room and went to his own garret upstairs. Mrs. Snow lingered. Could she by any possibility have known the contents of the letter? She must have guessed, and sympathised.

"I know the most respectable people's short at times," she was beginning; "and as to Mr. March, he's short by nature. But I'm not a hard woman, miss, to them that's willing, and——"

John March came down again, carrying in his hand the last possible thing that could possibly have been looked for in connection with him. It was a mantilla of black point lace, that even the most ignorant could tell was of value enough to cover a multitude of sins, and to have paid at once ten times all the rents in Saragossa-row. Mrs. Snow touched it timidly. With a plain black dress, dark hair, and southern eyes, it would make an eccentric but yet perfectly orthodox costume for an artist; and——

"Bless me, if I can make out those Marches!" said Mrs. Snow, later in the day, to Mrs. Hale, of number twenty-three. "They don't eat enough, nor drink enough, and one 'd think they were as poor as Job; but they get letters from ladies with coronets in Park-lane, and keep lace things that the pawnshop 'd give a quarter's rent for. I know. P'raps the old gentleman's a fence. But there's worse lodgers than fences; and maybe the young woman won't come back from Park-lane empty-handed. I had a lodger once that forged; and he was the best that ever I knew. Anyway, I'll keep them on as long as they've got that thing, and welcome; and if they're doing a duchess, it's too good a pie not to have a finger in."

Whence it may be concluded that Mrs. Snow possessed an art much cultivated by some foreign statesmen, of knowing what is inside undelivered letters, and of taking their measures accordingly.

END OF THE NINETEENTH VOLUME.

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SHEPHERDS ALL AND MAIDENS FAIR.

BY THE AUTHORS OF "WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME."

THE EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF **ALL THE YEAR ROUND.**

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

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SHEPHERDS ALL AND MAIDENS FAIR.

CHAPTER I. CLEAR SKY LAND.

MORNING in Clear Sky Land. The sun has crossed the sea all the way over from smoky Liverpool; the rain was beginning when he left that city, so that he sank into the ocean, making, athwart the turbid sky, murky rainbows bleared by the smoke, which had one foot in Birkenhead and the other over Aigburth. He went at his usual pace, having no occasion to hurry, straight across the North Atlantic, regardless of a gale of wind and a storm of driving cloud. They were right in his teeth, too, all the way, so that he never saw, except at brief intervals, any of the great Allan ships, on their way from Liverpool to Quebec, facing the wind as boldly as himself, and as resolutely making steady way in the teeth of those great waves which swept at their will adown the open decks. Nor did he see—which was a pity for them—the passengers making themselves as comfortable as circumstances at sea permit in the deck saloon, rolled in wraps, propped up and jammed between table and wall, reading, telling yarns, smoking, chatting about their ship and praising her good qualities, playing cards, or even singing songs; while outside, the officers, holding on to the ropes that ran along the bulwarks, plashed about in great boots, keeping one eye night and day always fixed on the compass, which hung midmast-high aft,

to keep the good ship Polynesian on her right course. Beneath the sun lay an endless gray bank of cloud which never lifted for two thousand miles and more, and beneath the cloud lay a broad gray sea which never brightened, for lack of the sunshine, but kept on rolling aimlessly great gray waves, which sulkily hurled themselves against the bows, and then, having effected nothing, sank down behind the conquering craft, and left their neighbours to make the next attack.

"A good beginning," the sun might have said when he saw Clear Sky Land ahead. But he was not like Jacques Cartier, a newcomer, and had seen the Atlantic every day for a good many years. So that when he reached the Straits of Belleisle, although there the summer does not begin till August the 31st, and ends on September the 1st, he knew that there were pleasant places beyond, and he went on his way cheerfully.

It was a morning in October, and the sun shone first, when foggy Newfoundland was left behind, upon the iron-bound shores of Labrador, with never a wreath of smoke left to tell of summer visitors and venturesome fishermen. As he looked up the St. Lawrence he saw to the south the low hills of Gaspé, clothed with pine, and at their feet a white house or two. On the opposite side he passed the great island of Anticosti, where for seven months in the year the forty people who live there have nothing to do, nowhere to go, and no one

but each other to speak to. The bears came out when the sun shone up the blue waters of the Gulf, and when they had shaken themselves up a bit, and rolled their heads in thought for a quarter of an hour or so, they began leisurely—for bears are never in a hurry—to get through the spruce woods, by paths known only to themselves, down to the beach, where the herring spawn lay thick among the kelp and seaweed. And safe out of the reach of the bears, upon a delightful ledge of rock, the seals flopped up to greet the coming day.

Farther and farther up the mighty St. Lawrence shot the arrows of the rising sun, falling on the high-peaked gables, white walls, and shining roofs of the riverside farmhouses; on the woods where the scarlet hues of the maple mingle with the dark hues of the fir; on the ships that come and go laden with timber, grain, and beef for this old country of ours, that seems to devour so much and to send out so little; on islands laden now with purple grapes as they were when Cartier saw them for the first time, and named them the Islands of Bacchus; on many a quiet old Canadian church where the dead are asleep, little more peaceful now than when they walked in the quiet monotony of their blameless days; on the gloomy portals of the Saguenay and the crashing waters of Montmorenci. When the sun saw Quebec he saluted her, "Hail! Queen of American cities. Take thou the robe of imagery;" and then he wrapped her round with a veil of purple, through which her masts and churches, her old citadel, and the houses along her crooked and winding streets, looked steeped in the light of some magic contrivance, ethereal, wonderful. Then he swiftly went on his way up the broad river; past Montreal, whose Royal hill looks down upon the city of a hundred spires; past the rapids; through the Thousand Islands; up to the bright little towns, busy and prosperous, of Lake Ontario and the stately city of Toronto, Queen City of the West; along the northern railway, passing through Barrie and the lovely scenery of Lake Simcoe. And then he came at last to the land of Clear Skies.

When, after this long journey, the sun rose upon Clear Sky Land, the creatures in the forest naturally woke up first. There were the squirrel and the chipmunk, who always sleep with one eye open; the

martin, an early-riser by deliberate choice; the beaver, always weighed down with responsible work; the minks, who get their work done early, so as to be out of the way of the trapper; the fox, for similar reasons, and with an eye to poultry; the cariboo, who is a light sleeper; and the bear, who is a hungry creature, and takes his breakfast as early as he can get it.

And then the birds woke up—there are not many birds in Clear Sky Land—and began to forage for flies, of which there are plenty. And the flies, who are an unsuspicious, and even a confiding folk, woke up and prepared to enjoy themselves in the sun. Those who escaped the birds had a good time all day.

Lastly, the people in the villages and farms got up too, rubbed their eyes, and dressed themselves with more care than usual, because it was the great day of the year—the day of the Agricultural Exhibition. And then cattle lowed, sheep-bells rang, cocks crowed, turkeys gobbled, ducks quacked, donkeys cleared their throats melodiously, and another day began.

It is a land of lakes as well as of clear skies. They lie stretching out loving arms to each other, scattered thick over the face of the country. They are all alike in being wondrous beautiful, and all different in that the loveliness of every one is distinct and personal, like the loveliness of a woman, but each with the characteristics of her kind. Some are studded with islets, each a rising mound, on which the hemlock and the maple stand side by side with pine and tamarisk. On these islets are the wigwams of Indians; on the shores are their brown children playing; among the waters run in and out, or lie lazily floating, the birch canoes of those of the yellowskins who have yet energy enough left to go fishing. Some are broad sheets of placid water; some are narrow and winding as Windermere; all are fringed with forest, like Grasmere, and all abound in fish. Behind the shore rise the low hills with their woods yet untouched. There a solemn silence reigns, unbroken, save rarely, even by the voice of bird; few settlements have yet been planted in that forest primeval. The pine and the hemlock share the ground with the maple. Clear Sky Land calls aloud for men. Look again at the forest as you glide beneath it in the little country-made steamer. It is late autumn, yet the foliage of the underwood is as bright and as fresh as the foliage of early June in an English

wood. Look deeper, search for the sombre shades of the European forests. There are none. It is the characteristic of a Canadian forest that it is all bright throughout, as if the sun shone quite through the leaves overhead, and the tops of the trees were transparent. It is like a scene of Fairy-land. You have never seen any theatrical scene, even at Drury-lane, half so sweet, half so touching in the green brightness of its colouring, as the forest that borders the lake. See, again, the steamer has left the latter, and turned her bows up a river where the trees come down to the edge of the bank. We go very slowly, and, but for the dip of the wheels, silently—on either side the gleaming forest. You think, perhaps, that you have seen nature elsewhere at her best as a colourist; you have recollections of tropical sunrises, of Italian evenings, of African skies, of Atlantic sunsets; you remember the peaks of the Tyrol, the passes of the Alps—well, own that this forest surpasses all. The underwood is green and bright with a sunshine which must be wholly due to the transparency of the trees above; but the maple-leaves have changed their colour and are transformed. They are crimson, they are scarlet, they are ruby-red, they are a deep rich golden yellow, they are brown edged with red, they are purple, they are of every hue and tinge that the eye of painter has conceived or the hand of nature executed. And now the sun lifts his head above the opposite bank and they spring into life and light, like a statue touched by the finger of a god.

The steamer groans and backs and plunges, and finally fetches up alongside of a little wooden pier. All may get out, and let us make the best way we can to Dee Bank, where the exhibition of this year is to be held.

An empty saw-mill, newly built over a stream of rushing water. Beyond the mill a wooden bridge; above the bridge a fall of water over moss-grown boulders—did I explain that it is a land of falls, as well as of clear skies and sunny lakes?—above the fall, forest, labyrinthine, many-coloured; at right hand, forest; at left hand, forest; before and behind, forest—on every side but one, and on that side is the settlement of Dee Bank. There is a township of half-a-dozen houses; they are frame-houses, built of wood, and standing round an irregular sort of Place, the most prominent structure being the school. There is one large meadow wholly cleared,

and there are fields beyond where the black stumps are thick upon the ground. There are not many fields, because Dee Bank is a small settlement; there are many stumps because it is a new settlement. No doubt, if we visit Dee Bank again in twenty years, we shall find a population of as many thousands as there are now hundreds. There will be half-a-dozen churches; there will be a daily paper; there will be great hotels. At present this territory is laying the foundations of her future. She has her lakes, her rivers, her falls, her unrivalled beauty; she has already her scanty population of hardy and thrifty yeomen. She is to be the mother of many, and the producer of much. At present it must be owned that the black stumps give the country an unfinished look, as if the people had just moved in, or had been having a universal washing-day, so that they had had no time to tidy up and fix things neat.

The big lumber-mill is turned into an exhibition-house. On the first floor are the exhibits arranged in seemly order, while the judges go round to assign the prizes. There are butter, cheese, and bread; there is maple sugar; there are preserves; there is work in knitting, sewing, and spinning; there are vegetables—enormous pumpkins, great wealth of carrots, potatoes and turnips; there are barrels of great tomatoes, things which no Canadian can resist, whether raw or cooked; and there are barrels upon barrels of grain.

The judges go round with anxious faces; this is real business; the land is, as it were, on trial. Shall Red River boast because of her grain? Look here—and here. Saw man ever finer vegetables, bigger pumpkins, more beautiful tomatoes? Can the whole world produce better apples? Go to.

The ladies follow, judging the household work. Not only the land, but the house also, is on its trial. As they go slowly round, making notes, their faces grow more cheerful. In Clear Sky Land, they seem to say, the girls can hold their own against any in the old country. Saw ever woman a finer pair of knitted socks? Can there be broiderery more beautiful and more useful than this child's garment? That is by a Norwegian girl, one of the three hundred who came here a year ago rich in health and vigour, stalwart descendants of the hardy Norsemen, but poor in purse, which matters little in Muskoka. They

were waiting about the day after landing, feeling lonely, strange, and desolate in the emigrants' quarter, when King Dufferin heard of them and came down and cheered them up—that genial sovereign—by giving them welcome to the Dominion in their own tongue, so that first they all cried and then they all laughed. Give the Norwegian girl the first prize. Very likely she will send the socks to King Dufferin.

Outside, more business. They are judging cattle, horses, pigs, and farming implements. The young men are there, serious and thoughtful, and with them the old. This is no playtime of idle villagers. There are no labourers leaning against posts anxious for beer time. Everyone is interested, because everyone has a personal stake in the friendly contest. He who is worsted may learn a wrinkle from the conqueror. It is a game of real earnest, in which the last great prize open to all is—fortune and comfort. You may look at the men. There is a Lowlander; he was a shepherd to the Marquis of Very-broad-acres; his ancestors were yeomen of Scotland, but the land has long since gone; he is a hard-headed Scot, with high cheek-bones and a long square chin. Dollars are ringing in that man's pocket already. Yet it is not five years since he came over, a man without a penny; he saved fifty pounds in eighteen months as a farm labourer; he took up a free-grant plot of land; the next year he wrote for his girl to come over to him; and now he is a substantial man. The next man to him is a Somersetshire lad; he brought money over with him—not much, but some. He bought a cleared farm, and he grows beef for the London market. Some day he will be rich. And wherever they came from, whatever they were, they are now hard-handed, hard-headed farmers, who neglect no chance, and spare themselves no toil, catch at every new invention, try every kind of crop, and are determined, since the land of Clear Skies has to be planted, to clear away its fairy forests where the sunshine sleeps in the leaves, so that it shall be changed into the land of Sweet Fields, the garden and glory of the Dominion.

They are not well dressed. Even their best friends will at once admit so much. They wear, indeed, every kind of serviceable garb, except what the Americans call store clothes and stovepipe hats. As for the hats, indeed, all the old hats of all the world—even the old hats from

the Jews' quarters in Poland—must surely go out to Muskoka. There is no accounting otherwise for the extreme badness of the hats and their incredible age. Only one young fellow of the whole assemblage can claim to be fairly well roofed. He might pass muster at a meet, so neat, so well dressed in serviceable corduroys, stout boots, and many-pocketed coat, is he. That is John Pomeroy, son of Mrs. Pomeroy, and nephew of Mr. Burdacombe, Reeve of Sheridan Town. His is the best buggy, his are the best train of plough-horses, his is the best bull. And it is his mother who gets the first prize for butter.

This young man is four-and-twenty years of age. He is six feet high, and his shoulders are broad and square; his face has not that full-blown rosiness about it which belongs to a healthy young Englishman of his own age; the clear dry air has toned him down; his cheeks are thinner; his limbs are more slender, but not the less strong. In his hands the heavy Canadian axe is as light as a penknife, and lops off great boughs as a lady would trim a rose-bush. His chest is deep; his voice is deep; he walks as one who has no fear or trouble in his mind; his face has yet the seal of innocence upon it, because he has never seen a town—except once when he went to Toronto, and found himself in that metropolis almost stifled by the houses. His hazel eyes are clear; his step is long and elastic. Happy the woman who calls such a lad her son; happier still the girl who calls such a man her lover.

Mr. Stephen Burdacombe, his uncle, is one of the judges. When his nephew's cattle are brought up, he shakes his head, and will not give them any prize, and then the crowd assign him the prize by acclamation. He is a substantial farmer; dollars have accrued to him; he is Reeve of his township; and he is very greatly respected, partly because he is successful, partly because he is reputed to be so wise, partly because he is a man of very, very few words. Nature has given him the faculty of work, which is an invaluable profession by itself, especially in Muskoka; nature has also given him an unerring eye for the points of a cow, the qualities of a pig, and the value of a farm-horse. He knows land intimately, so to speak, and can read off its capabilities as if out of a book. But he has preserved his old rusticity; he looks,

walks, and speaks like the small farmer he was in England; and he very seldom speaks, because speech is a trouble to him. Nature denied him the power of expression; she made him, save for the few hundred words required for the farm-life, dumb; and by the time John Pomeroy left school, which was at fifteen, there was nothing about the place that he could not manage as well as any grown man.

It is half-past twelve. There is a general movement, with a universal look of increased seriousness, in the direction of one of the houses in the township. It means Dinner. At this ordinary all dine together, taking turns in batches one after the other. There is no distinction of rank to observe—there are no masters and no servants, because all are alike in the land of yeomen. Dinner of roast beef, with huckleberry-pie and apple-pie; dinner for five hundred men, all true English-born, with the extraordinary and amazing fact that there is no beer. Imagine a collection of hungry Englishmen contentedly sitting down to dinner without beer. Instead they have tea, or milk, or water; but mostly tea. Actually nothing to drink at Dee Bank at all; and not a single enterprising publican to run up a booth, and make men stupid with fiery whisky and adulterated beer. Not a place within ten miles where a drop of anything can be got. It seems sad to us, dwellers in a foggy climate, but we need not waste our pity. They want in Clear Sky Land neither sympathy nor beer. The sharp and bracing air, the plenty and perfection of their food, the habit, without the pledge, of temperance—all these together make them contented, though they never see wine or whisky. And for appetites—but watch the guests if you would understand what feeding means. Quick, neat-handed Phillis, another plateful here, as large a slice as the ox can boast; more potatoes—saw one ever mealier ones?—more cabbage and more beans for Tom, who is looking about him with wistful eyes; another square foot or so of fat and lean for Jack; a cubic six inches or thereabouts, with a bit of the brown corner, for Harry; more tomatoes; more apple-pie, and the sugar this way; huckleberry-pie for ten, if you please; more bread, plenty of bread; more tea for everybody. A great, a Gargantuan feast; and at six o'clock it will be done all over again, for this is a land of plenty, and everybody is always hungry.

We do not talk much during the dinner, because we sit down to eat. After we have eaten we go back and talk more—we talk with the girls, who are here in force, neat and smart—because girls are girls all the world over. We discuss with them the chances of the winter; what private theatricals we shall have; where we shall get the best tobogganing; what sleighing-parties we shall get up; and what dances. For we are fond of amusements in Clear Sky Land, and our favourite amusements are acting and dancing. Summer is work time, in winter we play. Then we have the glorious days of sharp, clear frost, with never a breeze to stir the branches in the forest, day after day, week after week, bright, still, and cold; when, without, we warm ourselves with farm-work and wood-cutting, and within, the stove keeps all the house, day and night, snug and comfortable. It will soon be upon us, the winter; already the maples are brightening for one last effulgent burst of colour before they drop their leaves, and then the snow will come and the leaves will fall. Already the first detachment of lumberers from the Montmorenci Works are making their way north, laughing and singing, carrying as they go the long-handled Canadian axe, talking their queer old seventeenth century French, the tongue of La Fontaine, unmixed by any modern argot.

Towards the afternoon the stir and bustle grow quieter. The last prizes have been adjudged, the last animal has been walked round for inspection. There is already the beginning of the homeward move; carts, buckboards, buggies, and all kinds of wonderful vehicles are brought out; horses are harnessed, and party after party driven away, until Dee Bank is left in its wonted solitude, and the half-dozen folk who live there always can begin to talk of the wonderful day they have had. North, east, south, and west, the people plunge into the long lanes of greenery, and disappear. Every opening where blackened stumps show a settlement takes one of the carriages off the rough and uneven road; presently they cease to pass, and the squirrel and the chipmonk begin again to run races along the silent path.

You will see no such gathering as this in the old country. These are the pioneers of a great future. Look on them with respect. These gray and grizzled men, with the steadfast eyes and grave faces, are those who have wrested the fruits of the earth from jealous nature, who wanted

to keep all the place for her beautiful maples. This exhibition at Dee Bank, poor as it would seem at Islington, represents the result of fifteen years' toil. Remember that these men have inherited nothing and created everything. They came to the forest, axe in hand, to plant themselves among the tangled underwood, each in his place. They have cut down the trees; planted, sowed, reaped; cut down more trees; built houses, churches, and schools; made roads, and founded cities. These sacks of golden grain, these splendid fruits, this generous wealth of vegetables, and flowers, and garden growth—it is all absolutely the work of their own hands. There is something touching in the simple pride which such a settler feels in such work. He must be a real man who has made such a home for himself, where before him was only a home for the she-bear and her cubs.

The last to go are Stephen Burdacom and John Pomeroy. Without speaking, the older man steps into his nephew's light American buggy.

"Coming home with me, uncle?" says John.

"Ay, lad," he replies slowly. Then he takes the straw out of his mouth, and, as if making a real plunge into action, throws it away. "She wrote to me," he began.

"Ay! my mother?"

"And she said that she hev a thing to say to you." Here he stopped, and thought much harder than ever he had thought before in all his life. It was an effort to find expression, not a struggle after facts. "It's been bore in upon me lately—last Sunday it was bore in upon me that—that massive, as you'd say it was a barrel of apples. In church, too. So when she said that she hev a thing to say to you, and when I knew what that thing must surely be, I said to my old woman—I up and said, after dinner on Sunday morning—'I stand by Mary throughout. If Mary tells the boy I must be there too for to stand by her. John Pomeroy,' I said—meanin' you, my lad, and no other—he's a fine boy and well grown, and never said nor done other than what is right. But he don't know this, and when he does know it I must be there to stand by Mary. Blood,' I says to my old woman, 'is thicker than water. She's the only sister I've got, and I'm bound to stand by her.'"

John Pomeroy listened to this speech, which, what with the depth of the ruts and the height of the boulders, and occa-

sional gaps in the corduroy road, was much interrupted; as the speaker, clutching to the back of the seat, was shaken and bumped about.

"Got a thing to say, uncle?" he replied calmly, for the announcement affected him but slightly. Young men like John Pomeroy are not always nervously expecting something bad to happen; and besides, he knew his uncle's ponderous manner of speech, and the solemn introduction of the subject did not at all alarm him.

"Got a thing to say, uncle? Very well, I shall be very glad to hear anything that you and my mother have got to tell me. I say, uncle, she will be real astonished at the aged bull's prize. Well, the place isn't Bow-park, that is quite certain; but if they've got finer cattle anywhere else—except Bow-park—than ours, I'd like to get up early in the morning and go and visit that place. Hallo! Hold up, uncle. I'll mend this road to-morrow. That was a deep one. Here we are."

A homestead in Clear Sky Land. A farmhouse and a farmyard. The house is built of wood, like many other Canadian houses, and it is painted white, with green jealousies. It is a house of two storeys, with high-pitched roof, which is more the fashion in the province of Quebec than in Ontario. There is a flower-garden and a kitchen-garden; there is a lawn in front, not quite so trim as a lawn would be in England; behind the garden is the forest; and on either side of the house stretch the acres that this stalwart young fellow, now unhitching his horse, has cleared of trees, save their stumps; has ploughed, sowed, and reaped, nearly all with his own hands.

A lady comes to the door at sound of the voices. Her hands are rough with work; her dress is homely; but her face has upon it the seal that belongs to a gentlewoman. Her brother, Stephen Burdacom, is of the earth, a son of the soil; she, like him in face, is spiritualised, as one who has thoughts above the soil. She touches her son upon the arm, and looks up in his face with a little smile, as if contentment were upon her when she saw him come home again.

"Supper is ready, John. Come in, Stephen, come in both of you."

More beefsteaks and tomato sauce; more apple-pie; hot cakes and rolls; more tea.

After supper, John Pomeroy made up the stove, gave his uncle a pipe, and sat down beside his mother.

"Now, mother, you've got something to tell me."

She began to tremble violently.

Quoth Stephen Burdacombe: "Me to stand by you always. Let the lad know."

"Four-and-twenty years ago," Mrs. Pomeroy began—"four-and-twenty long years ago, when you were only a month old, John dear, we sailed from Liverpool for this country—Stephen, and your aunt Esther, and their two daughters, and I, and you in my arms."

"Yes, mother, I know."

"We told the people in the boat, and we told the people when we landed, that I was a widow. But I was not, my son—oh! I was not, and I am not now."

"What do you mean, mother?" The young man's face hardened a little, and she shrank for a moment.

"Easy, lad," said Stephen. "Let her say it out."

"We had quarrelled, my husband and I," she went on; "what we quarrelled about does not matter. I have tried, all these years, to persuade myself that it was my fault; but I cannot, John, I cannot. We quarrelled so badly that we separated—only for a time, I thought. But he came after me, a week later, and he said the most cruel, the most unfounded, the most wicked things." Here she broke down.

"Stand by your mother, boy," murmured Stephen.

"And I told him that nothing, nothing should ever bring me back to his roof again. I left him. I went home to Stephen. I heard nothing more from my husband, and six months later you were born. And then we came away. He never knew, he does not know now, that he has a son. He does not know that he has a wife living. He has lived alone ever since I left him, and I know not whether he repents, or whether he has hardened his heart."

John laid his hand upon hers.

"It is for your own sake, John, that I have told you the story. Tell me, my dear, that you believe in your mother's innocence."

"Elseways," said Stephen, "there is no good in having a mother, and you'd best ha' been born without."

John did not answer, at first, but he pressed her hand.

"I must try as well," he said, after a pause, "to forgive my father."

"The time is come," she said, "when you must cross over and tell him. He has

left the old place, and is living now in London, and he is reputed to be wealthy. In your own interests, you ought to see him."

"I do not want his money," said John, hotly.

"And it is your duty, my son, I shall give you papers sent to me six or seven years ago, which will establish in his mind the fact that he was made a dupe, by a wicked man, of his own suspicions. You will give them to him when you tell him who you are."

John got up and walked about the room. They were all silent for a space. Then he said, as if his mind was made up:

"And how am I to introduce myself?"

"I have thought of that, John. You will go under an assumed name; you will take a letter to my old friend, Eli Ramsder, which will tell him exactly who you are. It is from him that I hear once or twice a year about my husband. He will talk to you, and you must make out a plan."

"When am I to go?" asked John.

"You ought to go at once—in a few days. You can be best spared during the winter, and you will come back to your mother in the spring, or as soon as you can. Promise me that, my son."

"Yes, mother, I promise."

She was silent for awhile.

Then she began to talk to her brother.

"He will go and see the old farmhouse, Stephen; the dear old farmhouse at Moulsey Priors, with the sun-dial and the ivy; and the church where all the Burdacombs lie buried, and the river, and the orchards. Oh, Stephen, Stephen, shall we ever, you and I, go over again to the old country?" Because, you see, even in Clear Sky Land, there are times when the memory of England flies to the heart, and drags the mind, as with ropes, to sweet and sad reminiscences of days gone by, which seem to have been, but were not, always happy. "And I wonder what he is like now—after so many years—my poor husband."

That is happy, which is past. Poor Mrs. Pomeroy looked back upon the brief days of her wedded life, with an irascible, suspicious, and exacting husband, as if they had been lit up by a perpetual honeymoon. She tortured herself, sometimes, to find reasons for the cruel speech and the bitter insults which her husband heaped upon her head. Always, her heart was flying back to the man who had injured her; always, she regretted her flight and

her silence; always, she fancied that if she had remained, her husband would have softened, and she would have forgiven—oh! how readily—and all would have been happy.

CHAPTER II. GREAT ST. SIMON APOSTLE.

GREAT ST. SIMON APOSTLE is not a church, though the name sounds like one; it is a court, and it stands behind Carmel Friars, in the very heart and centre of the city of London. Once there was a church, which, with its graveyard, occupied one whole side of the court. The population of the parish, which consisted of an acre and a half of ground, dwindled down by degrees to a dozen housekeepers, and the congregation of the church shrank in like proportion to a quarter of that number. Yet, when the old church was pulled down and offices built on the ground, there were not wanting those who mourned for its loss. They left a part of the churchyard—a little strip of garden-ground laid out in flower-beds, and rejoicing in two trees, which still hold forth branches of foliage green in spring, black in summer, and yellow in the early autumn. Stretching out these arms across the narrow court, they touch the dead wall on one side and reach very nearly across to the windows on the other. Beneath the large tree lies the last remaining of the old tombstones. As for the other monuments recording the birth, death, and virtues of so many burghesses and their wives, these were carted away into the wonderful land where all forgotten things go, so that the dead citizens whose headstones might have done to countless generations a perpetual service of admonition, became at one fell swoop utterly forgotten. In spite of their eminent Christian virtues, they are no more remembered in modern London than if they had been so many woad-stained early Britons.

The houses on the left hand of Great St. Simon Apostle are three in number; they are large and stately houses of Queen Anne's time, built of brick, with flat façade, and without ornament. They have porches projecting over the doors, and the doors themselves are reached by stone steps. Inside, these houses—once the houses of substantial merchants—possess broad, deep staircases; their balustrades are rich with blackened carvings in oak, costly and precious. Now the houses are let out into offices. The only house on the right-hand side of the court,

standing on the site of the church, is a newly-built set of offices, with polished granite pillars, and carvings in quite the newest style. Beyond these chambers is the churchyard, on the right of which is a great dead wall, the side of some vast warehouse; and across the end stands a house of three storeys of the Georgian period, decorated in the middle with a shield. The shield is carved with the coat-of-arms of a late lord mayor, deceased in this very house a hundred years ago. The house is Number Five, Great St. Simon Apostle.

The court opens upon a square or place, part of Carmel Friars, closely hemmed in and girt round by buildings. A church is there, an old church with a round tower in the corner of the west front; the houses have crowded against it, so that there is nothing left open but the nave. If you were to look in at the door you would find that even the nave is more than the thin congregation want, because they have bricked up the chancel and built themselves a comfortable little chapel inside, with varnished oak walls, within the church; for this is the church of the Dutch, and within these oaken walls there gather every Sunday, to hear the Word after their own fashion and in their own language, all that remain of the once flourishing and prosperous colony of Hollanders.

There are two or three narrow passages tunnelled under the houses, by which one gets in and out of this queer place; if you pass through one, you come to another square to which this passage is the only entrance. This is a square with four houses in it, one on each side. They are great stately palaces, where once merchant princes lived in ostentatious splendour. Now one of them is the headquarters of a small City company, and the other three are let out in offices. If you go through another passage, or a third or a fourth, you find yourself in one of the noisy, crowded arteries of the City.

All day long and every day, except Sunday and Saturday afternoon, Great St. Simon Apostle and the square and Carmel Friars are echoing with a ceaseless throb of hurrying feet. No one looks about him—no one loiters; no one stops to talk and laugh; no one turns his face to right or to left. Church and court; churchyard and trees; old tombstones and flower-beds: these are things which everybody sees every day, and never sees at all. The mystery of the forgotten past which clothes an old city as with a sunlit cloud, for those

who have eyes to see, is nothing to the men who have every day to fight for money. Their ancestors lived and died where they worked; the citizens of London knew each other, and were known to each other; the rewards of a laborious life and an unspotted record were the civic distinctions which their descendants abandon to retail tradesmen; they gathered together on Sundays in their City churches, where now the Ritualist plays at Popery and practises forbidden pranks to congregations gathered from the suburbs, or the mild old Evangelical drawls his well-thumbed sermon to an assemblage of half-a-dozen. The place is redolent of dead citizens; and if the ghosts of those old citizens could revisit the place where they lived, the living would have no room to stand among the dead.

But the living are too busy to think of their predecessors; only those who do not belong to the City can afford the luxurious emotions which arise from letting the thoughts flow backward up the stream of time. The clerks and the principals come at nine and ten, their thoughts intent on the things of the day. At five they go away, and then, as if by magic, these courts grow suddenly still. Quite still. Not a footfall; not the echo of a voice; not the banging of a door. The church itself cannot be more quiet than the court without; and save for a faint rumble of wheels which falls softly on the ear in this sheltered spot, one might think oneself in a city of the dead, or a city at the early morning, or in a city of some theatre erected by the scene-painter, and waiting for a crowd of supers to play at the imaginary bustle of a crowded street.

All Sunday, too, save for the bells that bang and clash about the City, calling a people that are no longer there to hear, and except for the few minutes when the Dutchmen walk down the flags on their way to and from their service, the court and square are quite still and empty. If there be housekeepers in those great houses they are never seen; if the invisible housekeepers have friends they never come to see them; if a boy were to rush into one of these courts with a whoop his voice would drop before he got half-way through it, for the silence of the place would fall on him, and the hollow echoes taking up his cry would send it round and round from one wall to another, as if in every corner were nestled a mocking ghost of some boy dead and gone. But no boys ever

do come, because in that part of the City there are no boys. To find them you must go to the other side of Bishopsgate-street, where are Houndsditch and the Marks and a swarming hive of humans.

The only thing to be seen about Great St. Simon Apostle during this time of calm and rest, was the figure of a girl. When the evenings were light, that is from April until the end of October, she used to glide out from Number Five, the house at the end, and pass along the little churchyard, when the last straggler was gone and the last office shut. Had they known—some of those rollicking young City blades—what a pearl of beauty lay hidden in the upper storey of Number Five, I think they would not have been in such a mighty hurry to huddle their papers in the safe, and be off and away to the West, where all manner of pleasures are found. Or, had they known how, on Sunday morning, this maiden might have been seen sitting on the benches in the church among the Dutchmen, herself fairer than the fairest tulip among that bulbous race, they too might have had heretical yearnings in the direction of the Dutch persuasion, and become strangers for a time to their spick-and-span suburban church. The girl is Lettice Langton. She is rather taller than the average height of girls; she stoops a little as she walks, but that is from walking a great deal alone; her eyes are generally cast downwards. If those eyes were looking you full in the face, you would see that they are of a deep blue, full eyes, which are clear, but not too bright. And if she held her head upright, as she should, because she is as straight as a lance, and her figure is as perfect as Diana's, you would notice what a delicately-shaped head it is, and your eyes would fall upon a face which is marked especially by sweetness and purity. There are some girls' faces which bear that expression habitually, and never lose a certain haunting shadow of it, whatever their after life may be. But to bear it as a seal upon the forehead, the mark of an ever-present abiding spirit and influence, that girl's mind must be set habitually upon things high and noble.

It is a Saturday afternoon at the end of October, in the year 1876. Outside the City, the day is one of those bright autumnal days with a clear sky overhead, and a soft mist hanging upon the trees; when in the morning myriads of threads, dotted with pearls of dew, stretch along

the hedges; when the last of the flowers are struggling against the season, the mignonette, sweet to the last, the chrysanthemum, and the aster; when the mind rests in the memory of the long summer, like an old man, placid and calm, in the evening of a good day's work. In the City it was nothing but a fine day.

On Saturday afternoon, and at half-past three o'clock, Great St. Simon Apostle is perfectly deserted; not a footstep in the passages; not one upon the staircases; the front doors of Carmel Friars are all closed, the blinds down; no voice anywhere. Only the door of the Dutch church is open, because they are preparing for to-morrow's service; and as all the preparation necessary is conducted by an old woman brandishing a duster, the proceedings are not noisy.

Stay! a light footstep—the door of Number Five is open, and a girl is standing on the steps looking out. She is dressed for outdoors, in hat and jacket—other girls would say that the former was old, and the latter a little out of fashion; also they would remark, that her dress is cheap, and her gloves worn and mended. Then they would turn up their noses, if they were common girls; if they were girls gifted with that good breeding which comes from the heart, they would pity her apparent poverty and admire her certain beauty. For, beside her pale, sweet face, with its regular features and delicate lines, her jacket fits her figure as if it had been made by the most fashionable Regent-street milliner—Lettice made it, in fact, herself—and the dress, which she also made herself, though it is of cheap material, is of soft texture, and of colour grateful to the most trained eye. She descends the stairs slowly; lingers along the iron rail of the little churchyard; looks up at the branches of the two trees where the yellow leaves are still hanging, expectant of the first frost, the first showers, the first cold winds to bring them down, and leave the black trees bare for another cold six months; and reads for the thousandth time the legend on the tomb—It is Sacred to the Memory of Meshach Squire, and it enumerates the benefactions of that citizen, the beautifyings of the church of Great St. Simon Apostle, the almshouses he established, and the Christian virtues of his life. Then she passed slowly down the court, and looked in at the Dutch church. The old woman dusting the seats saw the girl in the

doorway, and nodded greeting. Then Lettice came out and passed hesitatingly along the roofed passage, to the big street beyond. But that was full of passers-by, with noise of cabs, omnibuses, and carts, which jarred upon her nerves, and rather frightened her. It was a pity, because she had come out with a yearning for the quiet shades of St. Paul's, and a half-feeling that, perhaps, she might manage to get to Tower-hill, where she could see the river, and find a place of comparative silence for a Saturday afternoon. To-day she did not feel equal to facing the crowd, and crept back, with a sort of shudder, to the silence of the Friars. And after a moment's pause, she took the passage that leads to the four-housed square, and then, dropping into a slower step, she began to walk meditatively round and round the flags.

Presently there strolls down one of the passages into the Friars a young man.

It is the same young man whom we saw two months ago in Clear Sky Land, the young fellow whom they called John Pomeroy, the tallest, strongest, and handsomest of the young fellows there—the man of twenty-four, who has the broad shoulders, the tall limbs, the clear hazel eyes, the deep chest, and the deep voice.

He glances up the court wistfully. Number Five is as silent as the rest of the houses. He looks into the church, but there is no one there except the old woman with the duster, and she is anxious to get finished and be off, because the shades are already gathering more thickly in the gloomy old church, and she remembers that it is a place of tombs, where every flagstone lies above a dead man. Ghosts in City churches are uncommon, but they are not unknown. Then the young man hesitates, in doubt whether he shall knock at the door of Number Five. Then he remembers the square. Slowly walking round the flags, he finds the girl he came to look for.

She hears his step and lifts her head. See what a bright smile of welcome, like a ray of sunshine, lights her eyes as he lifts his hat and stands before her—lover-like, submissive. As yet he has said no word of love, and she has no thought except that here is a most noteworthy stranger, providentially dropped from the skies, to remove some of the dulness of her life.

"You said," he began, "you said—that is, I hoped—that you might be walking here to-day."

"I walk here every day," she said, rather sadly.

"Every day?" He looked round the narrow court with a sort of dismay. "Every day—in this prison of a place?"

Not an atom of respect, you see, for the memory of dead-and-gone rich men. "Prison of a place!" And this where only a hundred years ago three aldermen and one ex-lord mayor—substantial merchants, not keepers of shops—lived all at the same time!

She laughed.

"I do not find it a prison; I find it a place where I get fresh air and exercise, and can think."

"Tell me," he said, in wonder, "do you never go outside these walls?"

"Oh yes; sometimes. To-day I thought I would go as far as Saint Paul's, and walk up and down the south aisle——"

"Another prison," he groaned, having no feeling whatever for the venerable pile of Sir Christopher.

"But when I got to the end of the passage the crowd was so great and the men were jostling each other so, that I could not bear to think that I was going to make one of such a mob; and besides, the cabs were noisier than usual, and so I came back to my old favourite walk, where nobody ever comes to disturb me."

"Every day the same thing," he said.

She laughed.

"You mean my daily life. If you like I will tell you how my days are spent. We have breakfast at nine, Mr. Pomeroy and I. I suppose you think that late in Canada, Mr. Ashton?" It may as well be understood that Ashton was the name agreed upon with his mother by which John should call himself when he was introduced to his father.

"Well—yes," said John. "I hardly see how we should get along at all if we had no breakfast till nine."

"At two o'clock I send in his luncheon on a tray. At five o'clock I come down into the court, when all the footsteps have hurried away, and walk about here for exercise and fresh air."

"She calls this fresh air," murmured John, compassionately.

"At six Mr. Pomeroy shuts up his office—it has been shut really since five, but he remains there at work till six—and we have dinner."

"And after dinner?"

"Well, you have seen what we do after dinner. When you are not with us, Mr.

Pomeroy never speaks. He reads, sits by the fire, and looks in the coals. At half-past seven I give him a cup of tea; at ten he takes down his pipe and fills it; and then I leave him and go to my own room."

"And while he reads and looks in the fire—a pretty way of getting through the evening!"—had John's mother been present some reference would surely have been made to the fifth commandment—"looks in the fire, why can't he talk, or take you somewhere?"

"It has been always understood from the beginning that I was to leave Mr. Pomeroy to go on living as he had always lived, that I might do as I pleased, provided he was not disturbed. He gave me a piano, for instance, and as he told me I should not disturb him by playing, I play every evening. Sometimes I think that he listens."

"And does he actually never talk to you—never?"

"Before breakfast he says 'Good-morning;' in the evening he says 'Good-night.' Sometimes he will ask me at dinner if I want anything. When I tell him that I want nothing, and am grateful for his kindness, he says, 'Large deductions.'"

"What does he mean by that?"

"It is his way, you know. He pretends—because it can be nothing but pretence—to believe nobody. And in the same way he will now and then ask me how my brother Will is doing, and when I tell him that he is doing well, and is grateful for the start in life which Mr. Pomeroy gave him, he says, 'Hum! grateful. Large deductions'—meaning that poor Will is not so grateful as he pretends to be."

"And have you nobody—nobody at all—to talk to?"

"Nobody at all, Mr. Ashton; only the cook and the housemaid, and perhaps the old woman at the church."

"But that is a Dutch church. Do you go there?"

"Yes. It is close by, and one avoids the crowds and rush. Besides, though I do not understand Dutch, it is going to church, you see; and if you shut your eyes and make believe, the language sounds very much like English. And then there are the hymns. They are sad hymns mostly, sung in unison, and they play the organ in chords, so that the music rolls about the roof and peals in gusts, like the wind on a winter night. I do not think I could go to any other church now. And then I look at the faces of the Dutchmen

and wonder what they are thinking about, and if being a Dutchman is very different from being an Englishman."

This way of looking at things to the practical young farmer was new and incomprehensible; but it had a charm that he could not certainly have explained in words.

"You have not told me yet how you get through the day. Forgive me, Miss Langton, if I am inquisitive."

"Indeed, there is nothing to forgive. There is the house to look after first——"

"That wouldn't take long."

"We have the whole of the upper part, you know, five rooms and two garrets, where the servants sleep. Mr. Pomeroy's office——"

"That is the front room on the first floor?"

"Yes—is left quite alone. No one ever ventures inside that room, and unless his office-boy cleans the room it certainly never gets dusted at all. And I am the housekeeper, and have two servants, a cook, and a maid. When I have gone into the accounts, paid all the bills, ordered dinner, and all the other little things, I am able to sit down and read; because, you see, I have all Mr. Pomeroy's library."

"But they are only serious books."

"Yes; he has no light reading at all. I should like, I confess, to read a novel sometimes——"

"I will bring you a hundred novels," cried John, hotly.

"Thank you, Mr. Ashton. If you will lend me one I should be very much obliged. At present I am reading Mill's Essay on Liberty."

"Oh!" said John, who had also read that work, and had a lively recollection of a tough week of weary work grappling with it. "Always shut up in a room which looks on a dead wall; always taking exercise in a vault with the roof off," such was the disrespectful way he allowed himself to speak of this venerable square; "never a soul to speak to; never any society, and yet you are happy, Miss Langton? You are actually happy?"

"Yes," she replied, looking up in his face with her truthful eyes; "I suppose I am happy. Life is so smooth, for one thing, and when I came here first it seemed as if that compensated for all the solitude. We had a great misfortune just before we came; a great and terrible thing happened to us—to Will and to me."

"Will?"

"Yes. My brother. Of course. I see him every Sunday evening. Mr. Pomeroy always spends the whole of Sunday in his office; he comes to see me in the evening, and we have tea and music. Dear Will! You would like my brother Will, Mr. Ashton."

"I am sure I should," said John, "if he is in the least like—like the sister."

She did not blush. She was thinking of her brother, not of herself, and John's compliment passed unheeded.

"My brother Will," she murmured; "he is two years younger than I am. He is seventeen now. It is seven years since—since that dreadful misfortune happened to us, and of course it was worse for me than for him at the time, because I was the elder. I came here to live with Mr. Pomeroy, and Will was sent to school. In the holidays, Mr. Pomeroy, who does not like boys, put him in charge of one of the masters; and when he was sixteen, a year ago, he got him a place in a great house in the City, where they pay him forty pounds a year. It isn't much, but it is a beginning. And oh, Mr. Ashton, he is such a bright-faced, handsome boy, and his ways are so winning. Indeed, indeed you would like my brother Will."

John pondered this problem of maidenhood with an increasing wonder. She had no life of her own at all. She was effaced, buried, put away in a great coffin, this sweet Sharon rose among damselfs. No nun could lead a more secluded life. And not to have anyone to talk to; sitting silent all the evening with a silent man! That she shrank from the jostling and noise of the streets he attributed to her inexperience, or even the superiority of her nature. I, who am much wiser, can tell you that her nervous shrinking from the streets and from noise was due to nothing but her long seclusion. It was the beginning of what might end in shrinking even from the silence of the court; in living wholly in those two rooms; in the gradual destruction of brain and will, the ruin, step by step, of what was destined to be a full and generous nature, receiving and giving.

"Let me take you somewhere," said John; "it is a fine afternoon. We have an hour of daylight before us. Will you come?"

She hesitated. Not considering whether it was proper or improper, because she was not troubled with conventional scruples, which never came in her way, but considering whether she was not afraid to go

with him wherever he might take her. On the one hand, it was already half-past three, and the sun would set in an hour; also the streets were noisier than usual. On the other hand, there was this tall, strong young fellow to protect her.

"I will go with you," she said simply.

Outside John offered her his arm, and she took it, for the first time leaning on the protection of a man, so that the act seemed strange and even sacred to her.

"I am not going to drag you about the streets and make you tired," said John. "We will take a hansom and drive to the West-end. Have you ever been to Regent-street?"

She shook her head. Already her nervousness was disappearing beneath the healthy stimulus of a great excitement. The crowd of people, the shops, some of them already lighted, roused her out of her apathy.

Presently they came to Regent-street, and John stopped the cab.

"Now we are going to walk," he said.

The walk from Piccadilly to Oxford-circus took them three-quarters of an hour. In the course of that walk John went into several shops. One was a glove-shop, where he purchased twelve pairs of the very best gloves and a glove-case—size of the glove six-and-a-quarter, which was the size of Lettice's hand, curiously enough. Also he bought two or three beautiful silk ties of a pattern approved and chosen by Lettice, delighted at being consulted. Next he went into a photographer's, where he succeeded in getting some large views of Canadian scenery, the subjects being selected by Lettice. After this he took her to a book-shop, and ordered certain books to be sent to an address which he wrote down and gave to the shopboy. They came next to a shop which had ladies' hats and bonnets in the window. A great many ladies, chiefly young and pretty, were gazing with eyes ablaze at the splendours of this shop. John went in and bought a hat and a bonnet, both of the newest pattern, which he told Lettice were for a young lady of her height, so that if she would try them on no doubt they would fit the other young lady. Lettice was so obliging as to do this. Then they went into a magnificent great shop, where John said he wanted to buy a lady's walking jacket and a dress made up. Lettice gave him her advice about this little matter too, and John paid for the things and left the

address. Then he took her into a music-shop and purchased blindly twenty or thirty pieces which the man informed him were good. This parcel he carried away with him. And then he went into a jeweller's shop, and Lettice's eyes sparkled with delight. Oh! dreams of Golconda, what mines could hold more precious things than Lettice saw here? John bought a gold cross, and a gold chain, and a gold locket, and an emerald ring, which Lettice put on the third finger of her left hand and it fitted beautifully. And then John called another cab, and they drove home again.

"Tell me," said John, softly—he had been looking at the face beside him, as with animated eyes Lettice gazed at the brilliant street—"tell me, how long is it since you left Great St. Simon Apostle and had a holiday?"

"Four years," said the girl. "Formerly I used to spend a month every year with my aunt at Moulsey Priors, in Essex, but she died, and since then I have been nowhere."

"Moulsey Priors!" It was the village where his mother had been born—which he was going to visit.

"You have been a prisoner for four years," he said. "Miss Langton, will you—will you trust me a little?"

"I think I trust you a great deal," she replied. "Have I not trusted you to give me a drive through all these wonderful things?"

"No, no; it is not that. But I cannot bear to think of your creeping round and round that ghostly square all alone."

"But if I am all alone and cannot help it?"

He was going to say something, but checked himself with the thought that the time was not come yet.

"Oh!" sighed the girl, "we are coming to the end of our drive. There is the Mansion House! What is the time, Mr. Ashton? A quarter to six! We have been out for nearly three hours. And now I have got my silent evening before me, and somehow I do not feel as if I care for Mill's Essay on Liberty any more to-day. Here we are at Carmel Friars!"

John walked into the court—it was dark now, and more ghostly than ever—with the girl.

"I cannot ask you to come in," she said; "but Mr. Pomeroy likes you to talk to him in the evening. He said so the other day. He said, when you went away,

'That is a sensible young man, Lettice; I like him. But then, Large deductions—Large deductions.' He meant that he was afraid of liking you too much, you know. Will you come again soon?"

"Will you drive out with me again soon?" he repeated. "This has been the most pleasant afternoon in all my life."

"Has it?" she replied in all innocence. "So it has of mine. Do you think we can have another drive soon, Mr. Ashton? But, to be sure, you will not want to buy all those things again, will you? What a quantity of things you did buy, and what a lot of money you have spent!"

"There is a time to spend," said John, quoting Solomon, "and a time to save. I reckon this is a time to spend. Good-night, Miss Langton." He held her hand in his, for a longer time, and with a warmer pressure, than the mere leave-taking altogether warranted. "Good-night, Miss Langton. I forgot to say that—that—in fact, I hoped that you would accept the little things I bought to-day——"

"Accept—I—Mr. Ashton? Oh! I cannot. All those things?"

John Pomeroy was a little staggered. But he remembered that he was a Canadian, and therefore could not show the white feather. So he returned to the charge.

"Why, Miss Langton, of course I bought them for you. In my country, if a young lady goes for a drive with us, we always buy something to mark the occasion. Why, when you play these pieces, you will think of the walk up Regent-street—he placed the roll of music in her astonished hand—"and when you wear the gold cross and chain"—he deftly fastened the chain round her neck before she could prevent him—"you will think of our drive through the streets, and the pleasure it gave me. And the other things will all be here to-morrow. Of course," he added, "being a Canadian, I must follow the customs of the country. You forgive me?"

"Oh, Mr. Ashton," she said. "To buy all these things; and for me!"

He pressed her hand again, and was away.

I have never heard of that Canadian custom; but one can hardly imagine that John Pomeroy invented it for the occasion.

Her pulse bounded and leaped, the blood ran faster through her veins, her eyes sparkled with a delight she had never before even dreamed of; she would have liked to jump up and dance, in only think-

ing of this unexpected and wonderful drive. Sindbad the Sailor had never seen such sights—Aladdin never got such splendid presents. And she had to sit still through the long dinner, and beat down her joy while Mr. Pomeroy sat over his wine, facing her, as silent as a sphinx, regardless of her joys or sorrows.

After dinner the girl played over her new music, which was bright and joyous, and struck some chords in the man's heart, which awoke unaccustomed thoughts in him; and at ten, when she rose to say "Good-night," he opened his mouth and spoke.

"What was that you were playing?"

"A new piece, given me by Mr. Ashton to-day; he took me for a drive and bought it for me——"

"Ay! it seemed an old piece. A trick of memory, I suppose, which conjured up the shadows of the dead. Ashton, eh? Well, he is a practical man. He understands things. If money can be made in Canada, he will make it. Tell him, if you see him again—when you see him again," he corrected himself with a most unusual twinkle in his eye, "that I shall be glad to see him any evening at six—to dinner. I shall not send him any other invitation. Good-night, Lettice. She always professed to be grateful," he sneered. "Like all the rest—like all the rest! Ready to leave me for a lover! Gratitude! With her, as with everybody else—Large deductions!"

Then he began to smoke, and smoked till the clock struck twelve, when he got up and went to bed.

In the morning the presents arrived. But among them Lettice failed to find the locket and the emerald ring; and she wondered for whom they were bought.

CHAPTER III. LARGE DEDUCTIONS.

MR. POMEROY had been a resident, as well as the tenant of an office, in Great St. Simon Apostle for four-and-twenty years. He came to the place a man of thirty, and called himself generally an agent. That is to say, he was ready to do any kind of business on commission. Mostly his business lay with farmers, for whom he negotiated leases and renewals, bought machinery, and sometimes sold stock. In the conduct of his affairs he was quick and entirely trustworthy. He sought for no mean or unfair advantage, and kept his word like the Bank of England. On the other hand, he was hard; if he had

money to receive, those rents had to be paid on the day they were due. He had a large clientèle, but not one single friend; not one single man, for four-and-twenty years, had passed from the doors of his office to his private rooms. He was not a hermit, because he went in and out among men, sometimes dined in public places, was seen in places of resort, but he knew no one, and spoke to no one. And every evening he spent alone in his own room. He professed to despise and mistrust human nature; he looked on everyone as a possible knave; he admitted no enthusiasms, and he allowed no disinterested grounds of any action, however simple. A disappointed and soured man; a man whose nature, always inclined to be suspicious, exacting, and irritable—an unhappy nature—had received some violent twist at one time or the other. If in the course of business a man was praised; if a measure was advocated; if a work was admired; if anything was advanced in his presence which tended to raise the credit of human nature, or the reputation of any man, country, or human institution, Mr. Pomeroy had one formula. On those occasions he would lay his hands upon his knees, look his companion in the face, shake his head, and murmur, "Large deductions!"

At this time, his hair, which was short and curly, had gone quite white; it was a crisp, defiant kind of hair, which stood up in a thick crop, springing straight from his forehead. His eyes were bright and keen, but, perhaps, a little too close together. His features were strongly marked; his mouth firm, and his smooth-shaven chin square and long. Beggars, who are great observers and acute physiognomists, felt that it would be useless asking such a face as that for charity; people who go round to offices for benevolent or religious societies, came downstairs from his at once, and without pressing their claims, when they heard his "No" in a deep and decided note; and children who ask the time, women who ask the way, crossing-sweepers who ply the broom, were all alike struck silent by the cold sternness of that face. Possibly there might be some tender spot somewhere in his heart, but no one yet had ever found it out.

Certainly neither Lettice nor Will Langton:

It was, as the girl told John Pomeroy, seven years since she had been brought to Great St. Simon Apostle. A dreadful thing had happened to the children. They lived

in a certain market-town in Essex, not far from the village of Moulsey Priors, the old house of the Burdacombs. Their father was the manager of the country branch of a great bank; their house was the upper part of the bank. One day the father went out after the closing of the bank, as was his custom, but on this day he did not return. The mother sat up all night, waiting in alarm for the husband who was to come home no more. And in the morning, they found him lying in a ditch by the wayside—dead. He had killed himself. The mother, weak and ill herself at the time, died broken-hearted a week later. For there was more than suicide to face—there was disgrace. But this the orphans were partly spared, for Mr. Pomeroy came down from town and took them both away with him. Lettice he kept in his City house; the boy he sent to school.

"Understand," he said to Lettice, then a child of twelve, "that I am not to be disturbed. There is to be no talking and idle chatter. Amuse yourself as best you can. You shall have masters to teach you things, but do not talk to me or expect me to amuse you."

So the girl began the seven long silent years spent with this man, who never spoke to her except on matters of business.

For two years she and her brother went to spend a month at a certain farmhouse at Moulsey Priors, where her aunt lived; but the aunt died, and then there was nowhere to go to. When she was sixteen, Mr. Pomeroy asked her if she wished to have any more teaching. She did not, she said; although that was hardly true, because she would have liked the lessons to continue for the sake of the masters' talk. So then there was nobody at all to speak to. Will, too, was sent for two years' training in Germany, where he was to qualify himself for a foreign correspondence clerkship. Fancy the loneliness of the girl if you can! Try to understand the wild yearning that at times would come over her for somebody to come; for something to talk to; for someone to caress; for something to happen. No one, only an austere maid and an unsympathising cook, with, by way of an external friend, the old woman who dusted the pews and swept the floor of the Dutch church. No nun in any cloister could be more lonely, for nuns talk and work with each other; no prisoner in a cell could have been more lonely, for the prisoners have the chaplain to talk to. Long ago

she would have sickened and died like a flower shut out from sun and air, but for one thing which saved her. When she was eighteen, which was about the end of the year 1874, her brother Will came home from Germany, his education finished, and was permitted to spend every Sunday evening—Mr. Pomeroy locked himself up in his office during the whole of Sunday—with her. Thenceforth the Sunday evenings were hours sacred to affection and talk. She thought beforehand what she would talk about, so as to get the most talk possible out of the few hours during which her brother was with her. She studied what to say and how to say it, so as to please him; she put on her best things to please him; more than that, she gave him three-fourths of her money to please him. She clothed him with all the virtues that a boy can possess. He was the handsomest and the noblest of young men; he was the best and most single-hearted of brothers. Who does not know the length to which a fond woman's heart may carry her? Who has not experienced in his own life something of that sweet deception? We look in the glass, and we see what we are. A woman looks at us, and who can tell what she sees?

For Will Langton, too young to be altogether bad, was in a bad way. He was inclined for the things which young City clerks do well to avoid. He was idle, and fond of pleasure. He was extravagant. He was weak of will, and easily influenced.

It was on an evening towards the middle of October that the quiet dulness of Lettice Langton's silent life was disturbed. She was playing some old music in that dreamy, spiritless way which was growing upon her, daily eating out the hope and vigour of her youth. Her very dreams were faint now—those dreams of a possible and glorious change—and there were moments when she trembled, thinking of the dull, dark days before, and the dull, dark days behind.

It was a cold, rainy evening; a fire was burning in the grate, by which sat Mr. Pomeroy in his habitual silence. He held a book in his hand, but he was not reading, and his eyes were fixed upon the red coals.

Then the clock struck eight—a dozen clocks striking together—Big Ben in the distance, St. Paul's nearer, and all the City churches chiming in—some a little late, so that it was five minutes past eight when every one was finished. The regular

striking of the hours was also a part and parcel of the general stillness. When Robinson Crusoe felt the silence and solitude of his island most, the waves were rolling along the shore and the wind was clashing the boughs together, but these things only struck his ears without his hearing them.

So that when a quick and loud footstep echoed in the court, followed by a ringing at the door, both started.

"Who is that, Lettice?" asked Mr. Pomeroy. No single evening visitor had ever come to the place during the four-and-twenty years of his tenancy.

The maid brought up a letter.

"The gentleman is waiting down below, sir. I said that you saw no one in the evening, but he says he wants you very particular."

"Humph! Give me the letter." He broke the seal and looked at the signature.

"It is from old Eli Ramsden, the Quaker, of Moulsey Priors. What has he got to say to me?"

"DEAR FRIEND JOHN POMEROY,—The bearer of this note, John Ashton, has to confer with thee on practical questions. It is for thy great good that thee should see him at once, see him often, and learn to know him. This in truth, from thy friend,
ELI RAMSDEN."

"For my great good? See him often? What does Ramsden mean? Jane, show the young man upstairs, into the office. No, here, and light us a fire. My great good! As if anything could happen to me now for my great good!"

Certainly a good deal might happen to the pale girl before him, who raised her quiet eyes in languid curiosity to see the stranger. Doubtless some uninteresting City person—one of those who rushed about all day with eager faces.

No; a young man who, whatever he was, could not be set down even at first sight as an uninteresting City man. A young man of quite a different style. A tall and brawny young fellow, with clear-cut features and steady eyes; and as he stood in the door, hat in hand, Lettice felt for a moment as if she had seen him before, somewhere—perhaps in a dream.

John Pomeroy the younger—it was he—saw before him a pale and very beautiful girl rising from a pianoforte, and at the fireside an elderly man, with hard, stern face and white hair standing up all over his head in short sturdy curls. The room was plainly furnished, having the girl's piano, a case of books, and a single easy-

chair, in addition to the customary simple furniture of a sitting-room.

The young man felt a singular emotion. Before him was his own father, whose very existence he had never suspected until a few weeks before. His father! There was but little to be made out of surmises, but he felt, at first sight, that here was a father capable of quite astonishing things in the way of hardness. That was immediately apparent.

"You are Mr. John Ashton?" asked the elder man, referring to his letter.

"I am—I am John Ashton," he replied, with a curious hesitation, as if he was not certain whether he might not be somebody else.

And again Lettice had the feeling of having seen him before. The very voice was familiar. It was deep and clear, like the voice of her guardian.

"My old friend"—here Mr. Pomeroy looked steadily at his visitor—"my old friend, Eli Ramsden, tells me that you wish to see me. How can I serve you? or, as we are men of business, and I like to call things by their proper names, how can we serve each other?"

"Let us call things by their proper names. You can serve me by teaching me."

"I am not a private tutor."

"And yet you can serve me by teaching me. You are, Mr. Ramsden tells me, better acquainted than any living man with agricultural work of all kinds in England."

"Eli Ramsden is a man of truth," said Mr. Pomeroy. "I should not have said that of myself. But since he says it you may accept it."

"I do accept it. I am a Canadian, sir, not by birth, because I was born in England, but went to Canada twenty-four years ago, as an infant passenger, in the first steamer of the Allan Mail Line that ever crossed the Atlantic, so having passed twenty-four years out of twenty-five and two months in the country, I claim to call myself a Canadian born."

"You seem proud of it."

"I am proud of it, sir; we are going to be a great country some day."

"Ah! Large deductions!" murmured the elder.

"Well, we will talk about that another time. I am over here to learn all that can be known, all that can be taught me, to aid me on my farm in Canada."

"You have a farm? Of your own?"

"It is my mother's. I am her only son,

and I am, therefore, in a sense, the owner."

"And you have brought over money? We do nothing here for love."

"I am in command of three thousand pounds, most of which I am to lay out to advantage in implements and stock, but part I may spend upon myself."

"To throw away in what you call amusements."

"No, sir. To throw away in education—in such things as one cannot get in the backwoods. That is my business in England. And Mr. Ramsden says you can help me."

"Ay. I am agent for more than one kind of business. Suppose I can help you?"

"Then we will make an arrangement. This is my proposition: I will come here three nights a week; you shall answer my questions—there will be plenty of them—and you will tell me what you know. There is plenty of knowledge in your brain if I can get it out. Think this over, and make a proposal as to terms. Just as well be talking to me as sitting over a fire."

Mr. Pomeroy was taken altogether aback. Here was a young man, whom he had never seen before, actually proposing to intrude himself for three nights in every week into his private rooms; to rob him of his twenty-five years' evening silence; to pump him for information; to bore him with questions. The impudence of the thing startled him.

"You say," he replied slowly, "that your name is John Ashton—John Ashton. I never knew anyone of that name; and yet your eyes seem familiar to me. I knew a—a person with the same eyes once; quite the same eyes. I thought that person was in every way to be trusted. But there—the same dull old story—the usual deductions. Never trust to appearances, boy. Never believe in your neighbour. Fight for your own hand. Praise nobody. Trust nobody. Ask no trust of anybody. There, you have learned more wisdom from me in two minutes than you have learned all your life in Canada."

"Perhaps, sir," the younger replied, "that is a sort of wisdom which every man must have for himself. This young lady would not believe it as yet, at any rate. I am sure of that—any more than I believe it."

Lettice, who had been sitting on the music-stool listening, started.

"No," she said; "I cannot believe that

there are no good people in the world. I have met with one, at least."

She looked at her guardian.

"Tush! nonsense, girl. What do you know?"

"Will you take me, Mr. Pomeroy?" urged the young man. "You shall call me your pupil, your apprentice, anything you please; only take me. Let me come here three nights a week for a month or two. You will find me an apt pupil and a ready learner; only you must let me come as a friend and an equal, else I am afraid my Canadian habits will surprise you."

"Why do you want to come so much?"

"Why? For fifty reasons. Listen a moment, sir. Canada is a poor country, because she has never had a fair chance of attracting capital. What is the best way of attracting capital?"

"That is a broad question."

"No, sir. I think it is a narrow one. It is—success. Now, I believe we are going to succeed at last. We are going to become the great stock-farm for England. We have the lands, we have the railways, and we have the boats. As we grow in wealth, so we shall grow in greater esteem. I guess that is so, sir?"

He spoke with a very slight drawl, and the least touch of American twang.

Mr. Pomeroy considered a few moments. Then he looked up and said in a low voice, as if he had been fighting a battle with himself and been defeated:

"You may come. Begin to-morrow. Now, good-night."

"Thank you, sir, I will come. But I am coming as a friend, and so, please introduce me to that young lady."

"This young lady is my ward, Miss Lettice Langton."

The young man called John Ashton held out his hand. It was a very pretty, delicate little hand that was put forth to meet his grasp.

"I hope we shall be very good friends, Miss Langton. I have no friends, yet, in London."

"Nor have I," she murmured.

Then he was gone. They listened, as he sprang down the steps four at a time; they heard him shut the door after him; they heard his footsteps in the court and down the narrow passage of Carmel Friars. Then everything was quiet again.

Lettice Langton looked at her guardian. He was staring straight before him, as if he had seen a ghost.

"I am a fool, Lettice," he said, in a tone quite unlike himself. "I am a fool to admit that boy to the house. What does Eli Ramsden mean by sending me a mad Canadian? All because his eyes made me think of someone else. Eyes, and mouth, and voice—gestures, too, all reminded me. Strange tricks memory plays! Good-night, Lettice."

In his hotel close by, the young-fellow sat writing a letter to his mother.

"I have seen him," he wrote. "I have seen him, thanks to Mr. Ramsden's letter. He is gray-haired, but looks strong and vigorous. His manner is very cold, and he says that there is no one in the world to be trusted—of course I don't believe that. He said, too, that my eyes reminded him of 'a person'—that is what he said—'a person.' I acted entirely on Mr. Ramsden's advice. He is a stiff old Quaker, but he read all the letters, and when he had read them, he said dryly: 'Thy mother is a woman whom we may pity, friend John. I will think what thee must do.' And the next day he told me what I should do. Mr. Pomeroy—I am afraid to say my father, lest I should one day blurt it all out by accident—is the cleverest man in all England about agricultural things. The farmers go to him, and he buys instruments, gives advice, or sells advice, and acts for them. There is no one, says Eli Ramsden, like him; and, if he were a different man, he would make himself better known and acquire an immense reputation. But he lives locked up and has no friends. No one, said Eli Ramsden, has ever seen him in his private room, where he lives alone. So I was the first. I went in quite boldly, as if I expected to be received with open arms; and after a bit he gave way. He does not live alone, because there is a young lady with him, a Miss Lettice Something. Mother, I think I have lost my heart! I told you I would let you know whenever I did. Oh, such a pretty girl; such a quiet, sweet-looking girl! She did not speak till I spoke to her. But I made him introduce me, and I am to go as a friend. As a friend! If only he knew!"

"London is a splendid place, when you get used to the crowd. To-day I went to—" Here followed a page of description which we omit, because most of our readers have seen the Tower, St. Paul's, the Monument, and the Docks. "And, my dear mother, I can't get that girl's face out of my mind. Do you really

believe in love at first sight? And perhaps she belongs to some other fellow. Happy other fellow!"

Mr. Pomeroy, left alone, tried in vain to recover the usual tenor of his thoughts. Some chord had been struck which awakened recollections of the past.

"What is it?" he asked himself. "The lad's eyes, his mouth, his gestures—all remind me of her. Rubbish! I am put out, and nervous. She is dead—dead, long ago—long ago—dead and forgotten."

CHAPTER IV. THE IDLE APPRENTICE.

THE most edifying of all Hogarth's celebrated series used to be, in my young days, a certain contrasted pair of pictures. In one was represented the industrious apprentice in church, looking almost too pious, and singing out of the same hymn-book with a pretty girl. Love, religion, duty, the approbation of others, a proper sense of female beauty, and the applause of a good conscience, are all depicted in that fortunate young man's face. I could never, for my own part, divest myself of the feeling, that had it not been for the pretty, demure maiden, that young man might have followed the example of the other young man, who, as everybody knows, is depicted in the companion picture as playing heads and tails on a tombstone. He is all unconscious of the beadle, who is stealing on him from behind, cane in hand; and he is most unfortunately ignorant of the fact that his position is favourable for the administration of the most awful Crack, that he is ever likely to receive in all his life. These two apprentices are for the moment represented by young John Pomeroy, the industrious, and Will Langton, the idle. The former, spending his evenings in practical conversation, learning all that his tutor could teach, always in the society of the pretty maiden; the latter, unlucky Will, idling away the golden hours in billiard-rooms and music-halls. And on Sundays, while the idle apprentice spends the forenoon smoking tobacco, only pulling himself together to visit his sister in the evening, the industrious young man might have been seen at the Dutch Church in Carmel Friars, singing out of the same hymn-book with the sweetest girl in all London. How excellent and how manifold are the rewards held out to those who do their duty! To be sure, John understood no word of Dutch, but he was in

a church; before him stood the preacher, doubtless saying words good to hear; around him, within this narrow wainscoted fold, sat the honest Hollanders, listening devoutly; and beside him, her face touched with the glow of a dim autumnal ray shining through the windows, was Lettice Langton. It was new and strange for both of them. John's opportunities for flirting were few in the Canadian backwoods; such maidens as he met were—well—good and true girls as any the sun shines upon; but not like Lettice, not so sweet, not so delicate, not so dainty, not so altogether desirable and lovely. I fear that, while the voice of the preacher rang among the rafters, and echoed from the walls of the great empty church, that industrious apprentice, like his predecessor, was thinking more of the face beside him, than the Gospel that was being preached. When church was over, John walked with Lettice once or twice up and down the court, and left her to go home to her early and solitary dinner.

The evening lessons began. The young man took advantage of the permission to come as a friend in its fullest extent. He made as if he were an old friend; he pretended to be a confidential friend; he told Mr. Pomeroy the whole of his private affairs—except one thing—he asked his advice, as well as sought for information. So that, on the very first evening, Mr. Pomeroy found himself entrusted with the management, so to speak, of estates in Canada, belonging to a lady whom he had never heard of. Not only that, but he was managing them for nothing. Most men approached Mr. Pomeroy with that diffidence which belongs to a reputation for ability, wealth, and eccentricity. The young Canadian met him with neither diffidence nor timidity; he was, as is the custom in that free country, one man with another. Mr. Pomeroy, strange to say, liked it. What he liked more was the dash and pluck of the young fellow and his eminently practical mind. Perhaps what he liked as well was the change in his habits. He was roused out of himself. He actually began to talk to Lettice at breakfast and at dinner. He even seemed to take an interest in what she did; asked her, more than once, if she was not dull; and became, in a word, human.

"He is a practical young fellow," he said one morning. "That is what I like him for. None of your dreamy lot, who

go to bed at night thinking that all the world are struggling who shall be first to help them. No, no; he means to help himself first—that is his line. Meantime he is young, and of course believes that people are not all envious of success, and chiefly anxious to throw stones at men going up the ladder. Wait till he is a little older."

The prospect of seeing John speedily become as great a misanthrope as himself put Mr. Pomeroy in good humour.

"I wish he would come every night," he said. "We are poor company with each other, Lettice. Why don't you talk to me sometimes?"

"You do not like being disturbed."

"Tut—tut. Every man likes conversation. I do not like prattle. Now Ashton talks well. Why don't you pay him a little more attention? Then he would come oftener perhaps."

"I, sir?" Lettice opened her eyes.

"He would like it, I am sure, if you gave him a little encouragement. Now, look here," the conspirator nodded his head and looked crafty. "Offer to play to him to-night—you play very well."

So that evening—the third—Lettice, timidly glancing at her guardian, asked John Ashton if he would like her to play a little.

"The very thing I was longing for," he said, springing to his feet and throwing open the piano. "The very thing; but I did not dare ask it."

That was the case with him. He dared anything with Mr. Pomeroy, but with the girl he was afraid. It is a healthy instinct which prompts a young man's knees to tremble, and his voice to sink, before the girl he loves. Knees strengthen as one gets older, and the divinity of women falls from the saddened eye of experience.

Lettice played for an hour. She played with expression and with skill. Alone all day, music was her principal solace, and her piano the friend to whom she confided all her thoughts. She played, and the young man sat beside her and listened.

"At home," he murmured in her ear, "at home we have choral societies and madrigal clubs—I belong to one—but there is no one among us who can play like you."

She blushed with pleasure. It was the first time anyone had ever praised her. Good heavens! if people only knew the power of praise, and how it wins the love of men and women! Praise everybody,

you who want popularity; but praise as if you mean what you say, not as though you are sneering or envying, else people will hate you. Let every poet be a Milton, every woman a goddess, every artist a Raphael, every actor a Garrick, every newspaper-writer a Macaulay; then you will be greatly loved, and backbiters will have to operate on other people's backs—the backs of those who criticise and blame.

"Shall I sing for you?" asked the young man. "Or perhaps you will sing to me."

"No," she replied. "I have no voice. What will you sing?"

He looked about among her music and found a song which he knew. It was a simple Scotch song, and he sang very well and had a good bass voice.

"Ah!" said Mr. Pomeroy, "I used to sing once myself."

Lettice heard this with amazement. Mr. Pomeroy sing!

"Why did you give it up?" John asked bluntly.

"Because there came a time when I gave up a great many things in which I had formerly taken pleasure; because I learned to know the world. Was taught it in a single lesson. Most men learn it in a series of lessons."

At ten the music ceased, and Lettice left them alone.

"I always have a glass of brandy-and-water with my pipe. Will you join me?" asked Mr. Pomeroy in a burst of generosity, because hospitality was one of his disused virtues. We most of us have several disused virtues lying by, rusty for want of practice. Some day, when I have time, I mean to get all mine out, furbish and rub them up smart and clean, and go about brandishing them. Think of everybody's astonishment!

"Thank you," said John. "I never touch spirits or drink of any kind. And I do not smoke."

Mr. Pomeroy belonged to that old-fashioned school of thinkers who hold that wine, and especially port, should be consumed after dinner; beer, and especially bitter beer, with luncheon; and spirits, especially brandy, before going to bed, with two pipes. He clung to these habits, and it seemed flippant that so young a man should refuse to conform with them.

"Not drink anything—a tectotaller? And not smoke? Why do you affect these singularities?"

"Well, sir, they are not singularities at

all. At least, I do not mean them as such. They are the customs of the country."

"Do you mean that no one in Canada drinks anything?"

"Not quite. Only that a large proportion among us, even in the towns, are temperance men, and that, in my part of the country, very few drink at all."

"Well!" said Mr. Pomeroy. "Large deductions, no doubt, large deductions."

It was on the Saturday after the first of those evenings that John took Lettice for her drive.

On the Sunday morning, when she came down the Friars at eleven o'clock, he was waiting for her in the porch of the church.

He saw that she had put on her new jacket and bonnet. She was not surprised to see him. "I thought you would be here," she said simply. "You can come to church with me; we are just in time."

After church he asked her to go for a walk with him, but she refused, on the ground of early dinner, and he was fain to let her go. After the door of Number Five shut upon her, how flat, stale, and dull the whole place seemed. And what a dismal place London became, London on Sundays.

As yet, he knew, there could be no question of love. She was not a girl who thought of love-making; she had, he was sure, no suspicion of love, no expression of the slightest flirtation; ignorant of everything, of the world, of the ways of men, of society, of her own sex, she accepted the suit and service of John Ashton as an unexpected delight, a thing to be taken with gratitude, but which had one great drawback, because he would soon go away and leave her alone again in a desolation which would be aggravated by the memory of past joys. Already, in a single week, she had learned to look forward with eagerness to his visit; already she was trying to think what she would play that he would like; already she was remembering and treasuring up his words. Already her brother had the second place in her thoughts.

How was it, however, with the Idle Apprentice?

The boy was junior clerk in the great firm of Ferris and Halkett, with better chances than most of the juniors, because he knew French and German. The house paid him forty pounds a year for his services; Mr. Pomeroy allowed him an addi-

tional forty. On eighty pounds a year a boy of seventeen ought to be able to live; at least, a great many do.

Young Langton, however, did not by any means manage to make his eighty pounds cover all expenses. Very far from it, and in the course of a short twelvemonth he not only got through all that sum, but also through thirty pounds which he had got from his sister. He acquired, besides, a gentlemanly manner of establishing a system of tick with tailors and shoemakers, so that he was not only the best-dressed among the juniors of Ferris and Halketts', but none of his clothes were paid for. This advantage, which gave him so much more money to spend, enabled Will Langton to extend his knowledge of life by joining in its amusements, which he did chiefly under the introductory patronage of a brother-clerk, Ernst Kugel.

Kugel, a young man of two-and-twenty, a German by birth, had been long enough in this country to speak English perfectly. It was in England, indeed, that he acquired those habits and tastes which marked him out as occupying a position far beneath his merits. What was a hundred and twenty pounds a year to a youth who dreamed day and night of wealth, which, mind you, he would not hoard, economise, or lay out to any absurdly useful or beneficial enterprise, but would spend, and spend royally, upon himself?

Ernst Kugel hoped to arrive at this end, not by inheritance, which was absurd, nor by steady industry, which was equally absurd, but by short and easy methods. For one thing, he betted on horses. Whenever he had a pound to spare, he laid it on some animal about whom he had previously received a tip of the straightest kind. This amusement, while it occasionally gave him a pocketful of money, kept him habitually in the direst depths of poverty and debt. Of course he took whatever credit he could get, and, of course, he abused that confidence and broke his faith. He was, in a word, one of the very worst specimens that London can show, of the clerk who is at once cad and snob, crafty and unscrupulous. He drank as much beer, or anything else, as he could get; he smoked as much tobacco as the office hours and those spent in sleep would permit; his views on all subjects were low and earthly, his opinions on all men were mean and base; he was the very worst companion that poor young Langton could

have. And yet, because Langton was innocent, fond of amusements, and frank, Kugel fixed upon him for his victim, and began to teach him all he knew himself.

Kugel was handsome, in a way. His German face was of a type common enough, but pleasant. He had long light-brown hair and bright blue eyes; he was rather above than below the middle height; he wore a moustache but no beard or whiskers; his face showed few signs of his debauched life, save for the twitching of the muscles; but his figure was already rather bloated, and his "condition" prematurely bad. His shoulders were round, and he stooped a little as he walked.

The fact is, that as Ernst Kugel should have been born rich, in order to give the world an awful example of how money should not be spent, so Will Langton should have been born rich, so as to show the world what a curse idleness may really be. He hated offices and office work; he detested the drudgery of quill-driving; he longed for the half-holiday to come again; he thought the noblest thing of all was to be born with no necessity for work. He had not, you see, read Rabelais, who would have taught him that necessity is the first great master of arts.

Once out of the hated office, both young men fill and light wooden pipes. It is not that young Langton wants to smoke—in fact, he does not smoke except when he is with his friend; but there is a certain grandeur and independence in walking along the street, pipe in mouth.

"Where are we going to-night?" asked the boy.

"Well, we went to the Connaught Hall last night. I don't think we want two nights running of that entertainment, in spite of the ballet. Let us have a little pool. Have you got any money?"

"I've got ten shillings," says the boy.

"That will be more than we shall want," replied his mentor. "I'll show you how to divide the pool, my boy."

"I say, Kugel," Langton went on, with an anxious expression; "if Cassandra doesn't win—"

"Nonsense; she's bound to win. Didn't the trainer's own first cousin tell me there was nothing that could stand against her? Hasn't she gone up from twenty to one, when I got the tip, to six to one?"

"If she doesn't I'm cleared out," Will persisted, with a half laugh.

"Never mind, go to your sister; she'll lend you more money."

Will shook his head.

"Poor Lettice! She's given me three-quarters of her allowance already. I can't get any more from her. And then they're dunning me about the things I got on tick."

"I know. Come, don't anticipate trouble. If Cassandra wins I pocket a cool hundred, and you, my boy, twenty. Make up your mind that she's going to win. Think of winning twenty pounds. And now what are you going to have?"

They were in front of a coffee-house.

"I'm going to have a cup of coffee and a roll," said Langton.

"I'll wait for you, then. I am going to have a gin and bitters. Then we'll find out the fellows and have our little pool."

An evening spent in a low, badly ventilated billiard-room, the first floor of a public-house: for companions, ten or a dozen clerks of the same stamp as Ernst Kugel. Tobacco all the evening, with bad beer. Result of the entertainment: the loss of eight out of the ten shillings, slight improvement in skill at billiards, a headache, a shaking hand, and increased readiness to laugh at things evil and sneer at things good.

Surely Hogarth had this sort of thing in his mind when he presented the Idle Apprentice playing heads and tails on the tombstone, and behind him, as we know, the beadle!

CHAPTER V. A DRAMATIC SITUATION.

It was past half-past three in the afternoon when young Langton stepped briskly out of the great warehouse of Ferris and Halkett, buttoning his coat across his chest. There was good reason that it should be buttoned tightly, because in the breast-pocket he had a bagful of notes and gold, which it was his duty to take to the bank; this tolerably important trust being, as everyone knows to be the custom in our mercantile houses, confided to the youngest, and therefore, the least trustworthy clerks. In his own desk was a book in which were entered the numbers of the notes and the amount in gold. The bank was in Lombard-street, the warehouse of Ferris and Halkett in one of the narrow streets which lie between Cheapside and the new thoroughfare of Queen Victoria-street. There was thus a short walk of ten minutes between the office and the bank.

Will Langton did not look happy on this October afternoon. Like many an

older, and consequently worse man, he was in debt, and being dunned for money which he had not; like many an older and more foolish man, he had been living in a fool's paradise. That Cassandra should win the Cambridgeshire Stakes; Kugel's straightest and most trustworthy tip; Cassandra, on whom, by Kugel's advice, he had laid, when the odds were twenty to one, the last sovereign that was left of Mr. Pomeroy's allowance and his sister's gifts; Cassandra, who had been rising steadily day after day till she stood at six to one, and backers were plenty at the price—had been to him for the last three weeks a "moral;" nor did it come home to him until that day, the very day of the race, that there was just a chance for Cassandra to come in somewhere after the first. And all day long he had been trying to realise his position, in case of that disaster actually happening.

Of course, that disaster was bound to happen. Did anyone ever hear of a single case where a bankrupt man rested his hopes upon a prize in a lottery, the winning of a horse, the accidental determination of a chance in his favour, and of that lucky chance turning up? It is certainly open to say, that no sane man would so ground his hopes; it is also open to say, that the line between sanity and insanity is a good deal confused, and also, if that goes for anything, that there is much humanity in man.

Will Langton was that bankrupt and that fool. The winning of that one horse seemed to him the one thing which stood between him and a most awful scrape. Let us not be too hard upon him; first, because he was very young, only seventeen years of age; and secondly, because he is the only brother of Lettice.

Will had been brooding all day long over the state of things. To a seasoned vessel, the mere fact of owing more than one can pay, of receiving letters which dun for money and remind one of broken promises, of meeting tradesmen who make unpleasant remarks about gentlemen's words of honour, and so forth, have no annoying or worrying effect at all. Quite the reverse. If it were not for the little excitement caused by their letters, rencontres, and remarks given them, and the opportunities which they offer to conversation, many gentlemen would be hipped in their daily life, and at a loss for their daily toil. When you are young, it is different. To a boy of seventeen, a debt of five pounds is

a bugbear; a letter from a disappointed creditor is humiliating, and a threat of legal proceedings maddens; we get used to such things as we grow older.

By this time the race was run, and his fate—for everything at seventeen is full of fate—was decided. He looked up and down the streets for an Echo boy—none was in sight. But as he walked quickly in the direction of Lombard-street, steps came running after him, and a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

It was his German friend, and at the sight of his gloomy face, Will knew that the race was lost.

"She must have been got at," groaned Kugel. "Nowhere at all—not in it—not even placed. Oh, if we could only find out how it was done! A hundred pounds lost—cheated out of a hundred pounds."

Will felt sick and faint.

"Cheer up, young 'un," said his adviser, "the game isn't over yet, though we have lost this time. What's a sovereign, after all? That's all you've really lost, though you feel as if it was more. It's worse for me—I feel as if I had lost a hundred. I thought that hundred was certain."

"It can't be worse for you than for me. I made sure of that twenty, and I've got no money, and I shan't have any, except the weekly pay—fifteen shillings every Saturday—for three months more. How am I to pay up? And he threatens to go to Mr. Pomeroy and tell him what sort of a life I've been leading."

"What if he does?"

"You don't know Mr. Pomeroy. If he were to find out that I go about with—"

"With me?"

"Yes, with you and your set—I should hear the last of my allowance. And poor Lettice—Kugel, you must help me out of the scrape."

"It's deuced unlucky for both of us. As for me, my landlady doesn't know where my office is, and I don't mean to let her know. I owe for three weeks now—rent, and coals, and breakfast. Promised to pay up on Saturday. I rather think, Langton, my boy, that when she sends up her bill on Saturday morning, she will find the bird flown. How much do you really want?"

"The bill is fifteen pounds, five shillings, and sixpence."

"Phew! You must ask for time. It's your only chance."

Just then the City clocks struck four. Will started.

"Four o'clock! And now I can't pay in."

"Were you going to the bank? Well, that does not matter. You can take it back for to-night."

It did not greatly matter; only when Will went to give back his bag, the clerk, who should have received it, was busy. And when he tried again at five, the clerk was gone. So that, when he left the office a few minutes later, he had with him still the bagful of notes and gold.

"You can slip out to-morrow at ten and pay it in first thing," said Kugel.

"It is ridiculous," said that worthy, presently, over a glass of gin and bitters; "it is ridiculous to make a fuss over debts. If you can't pay them say so, and let them do what they like. A gentleman wants all the coin he can get for his amusements. Hang debts!"

Certainly Will Langton was in the way of becoming the first gentleman in Europe, for he had spent during the last twelve months every farthing in his amusements, if we count his daily shilling dinner as an amusement, and I do not know what else it was.

"But if he goes to Mr. Pomeroy, and lets out about things——"

"There will be a row, that's all. He will blow up and pay up, and you will go on the same as before. Come, Langton, have a glass of something."

Will shook his head. Then he hesitated. There was still a shilling in his pocket—enough for next day's dinner.

"Devil take to-morrow," said his friend.

Then Will Langton took something; and then they both smoked a pipe, and took something more.

At eight the boy's cheeks were flushed and his speech a little thick. Kugel had been paying for a good deal more.

"How much money have you got in your pocket?" asked Kugel.

"Two hundred in notes, eighty-five in gold."

"Eighty-five in gold," mused the elder clerk. "And the notes—I suppose they"—he pointed over his shoulder to an imaginary office—"they know the numbers?"

"I took them down. They are in my desk."

"Ah! in your desk. Well, old man, take care not lose that bag. Eighty-five pounds. Eight—y—five—pounds! What a flutter we could have, you and I together,

if we had that money to spend. Pay our bills and all. Start us fair again. It would be a good joke, wouldn't it? to pretend that you had lost the bag, wouldn't it? Let us see: you might say that it had been pulled out of your hand as you walked along, eh? You were afraid, you know, to tell them till the morning. I wonder how that would wash?"

He leaned forward to whisper this evil suggestion.

"Tell them I lost it?" asked Will. "But I haven't lost it!"

Which was quite true, because it was in his pocket.

Kugel, a seasoned vessel, who drank beer like water, and was as sober as when they began, forbore to pursue the subject, and taking the boy by the arm, he led him away.

It was half-past eight: the cold air of the October evening partially restored the lad. The rest of that evening—how an hour in a music-hall with more beer and pipes and bad air, led naturally to an hour or two in a billiard-room with more beer, more pipes, and worse air; how Will went through the various stages of heavy, sullen defiance of his destiny—you cannot possibly get light-hearted defiance out of adulterated beer—of maudlin cheerfulness, of dull stupidity, and of final complete and prostrate intoxication—may be passed over. When he arrived at the last stage his friend Kugel, who was still perfectly sober, and had been dividing all the pools, put him into a cab, and drove him to his own lodgings.

These consisted of a single room—the ground-floor back of a house in Soho, let off entirely to lodgers such as Mr. Kugel, who, for economical reasons, preferred one room to two. A young Frenchman, who spent his whole days in the reading-room of the British Museum, had the front room on the ground-floor. In the first-floor front was a lady who had seen better days. She lived by painting photographs. In the back lived an elderly man, who was a dresser of shop-windows. His work was over very early in the day, and in the afternoon he used to go out and admire the effect, not above taking a wrinkle from the production of other artists in the same line. An ephemeral form of art, it is true, but, after all, in the eyes of the true artist, what does it matter for how short a time he labours? On the second floor were an assistant hairdresser and his wife, a pair of love-birds cooing in one

cage; and at the back two young ladies of the stage, who clubbed their slender resources and lived in the same room.

Kugel, with the help of the cabman, carried the boy into his room and laid him on the bed. By this time poor Will Langton was quite gone. His eyes were open and he rolled about his head, but he could no longer speak.

Now the two rooms on the ground-floor had, in their earlier and more honourable days, been connected by folding-doors, which were now permanently closed and locked, so as to ensure the privacy of either occupant. It so happened that the tenant of the front room, feeling himself unable to sleep that night, was sitting up in bed smoking a pipe and reading—a most dangerous practice, which one would like to see entirely confined to foreign climes. At eleven o'clock he was startled by the most unusual fact of a cab driving up to the house. Who in that place could afford to drive in cabs? Not the lady who painted photographs; not the shop-dresser; not the two young ladies of the stage. The cab certainly stopped at the door, and immediately afterwards the listener heard heavy steps in the passage, as if two men were carrying something heavy, which finally found its way to the room behind. Then one man went away, the door was shut, and the cab drove off. And then he heard a voice—that of his fellow-tenant—in low tones, and speaking to someone else in a tone of remonstrance. This excited his curiosity and his wonder. Here was sleeplessness, for once, rewarded. He slipped out of bed, put out his candle, and applied his eye to the keyhole, gathering a blanket over his shoulders for warmth.

As he smoked in bed, he had been building in a not too fertile brain that Château de France, in which the dreamer becomes—not a hero of romance, not a Monte Christo of wealth, not a Victor Hugo of fiction, but—a successful dramatist. To be a dramatist is the dream of every young Frenchman of literary tastes; to hang about theatres and try to discover the secret of success, the elixir of immortality, is his nightly amusement. Young Henri de Rosnay—whose real name was Goudon—was one of these dreamers. He admired and envied Sardou beyond all men; to write such plays; to win such applause; to enjoy, in his own lifetime, such glory, was, to him, a thing beyond all posthumous glory, all renown among posterity. "What has posterity done for

me," Henri de Rosnay might have said, "that I should try to please posterity? Rather let me stand upon the boards, when the author is called, and receive the plaudits of living men and women."

To-night his thoughts had been particularly turned in the direction of stage ambition. He lacked, he felt, the power of conceiving strong situations, but he thought he could fit a situation with dialogue, if only that situation could be found.

Might not this be a situation? Midnight: two men secretly—he made sure it was secretly—bearing a burden into the room behind his own! that burden a human being! Man or woman?

So he stepped out of bed, threw the blanket over his shoulders, and peeped—what will not man do, incited by natural ambition?—through the keyhole.

Then that young Frenchman saw some very strange and curious things.

First, the tenant of the room was not alone; it was, then, a human burden. With him was quite a young man, lying on the bed, with flushed cheeks and half-closed eyes, breathing heavily. A very handsome boy, with delicate features and curly brown hair. But he was drunk, that was certain. What had the other brought him there for? Henri de Rosnay thought of strange stories which he had read of Paris, Cairo, Naples, and Rome, and began to rub his hands with delight. Behold, here were materials for a sweet situation: boy drugged; brought home insensible to be—murdered, perhaps; robbed, perhaps; and he there, the unseen witness. As good as any play. As good as anything he could think of, although not entirely original, in the whole melodrama of Paris.

The first thing his fellow-lodger did was not altogether in accordance with melodramatic tradition; it was to pour into a tumbler some compound, which might, he thought, be another drug. As a matter of fact, it was gin and water; a mixture, which if taken on top of a plentiful cascade of beer, is more certain than any known combination of spirits and water to stupefy persons already partially intoxicated. He lifted the boy's head and put the glass to his lips. Young Langton had just strength enough left to drink off the contents. Then his head rolled round; his eyes closed; he fell into the deep sleep of drunkenness, absolute and complete. If his sister had only seen him!

The Frenchman saw them. Next, the lad thus forced, so to speak, into a profound slumber, the respectable Ernst Kugel—whose name, however, he did not know—sat down and began to think, looking at the sleeper. After a little he drew out a penknife and opened it slowly, still gazing at his victim. Was he, then, going to murder the boy? Henri de Rosnay drew a long breath, and began to consider.

This was a very delicate and difficult juncture. To shout and run into the other room might prevent the murder, and so spoil a dramatic situation. To stay where he was and look on might produce a splendid tableau, and yet allow a blood-thirsty murder. Henri de Rosnay was a kindhearted young fellow, though his love of art might seem to override his dislike to manslaughter, and it must be owned that for a moment he wavered.

Happily he was spared the necessity of the choice. Ernst Kugel, it appeared, had no design whatever of murdering the boy. All he did with the knife was to cut, not his victim's throat, but his coat-buttons; not to stick the murderous weapon into his windpipe, but to gash and cut the buttonholes. What did he do that for?

Then M. de Rosnay observed that the boy's coat was tightly buttoned across the chest; so that the buttons cut off and the buttonholes gashed, the coat would have the appearance of having been cut open by violence. Then he chuckled to himself.

And he was not at all surprised after this, when the respectable Kugel put his hand into the inside pocket and drew it out with a bag—a bag of coarse sacking, which M. de Rosnay's slight experience told him was made to carry money backwards and forwards between an office and a bank.

There was a table at the foot of the bed, also very fortunately commanded by the keyhole, on which the robber, if he was one, quietly poured out the contents of the bag. There was a small bolster of notes and a quantity of gold. The Frenchman saw the man separate the gold into little piles of ten pounds each. There were eight of them and one smaller pile. Then he saw him tie up the gold tightly in a handkerchief, so that it made a small and tight rouleau. The notes he folded and put in an envelope. He looked about him next, as if for a hiding-place. Beside the fireplace, after lifting the carpet, he found a loose plank—no doubt he knew of

it before—one of those planks which are taken up when anything goes wrong with the gas. This he took up, and in the space below it he deposited his stolen goods. The Frenchman rubbed his hands—he saw his way to a really effective situation.

All this took time, but at last it was done, and the operator began leisurely to undress. The Frenchman saw that he covered the boy over with a blanket, without removing any of his clothes. In a few minutes M. Kugel was ready for bed, and, in fact, went there as quietly and naturally as if he had been doing a noble and honourable action.

When the man at the keyhole saw the candle put out, he removed his eye—which was, in fact, of no further use in that position. And then, perplexed, but much elated, he went to bed too.

In the morning he was awakened by voices in the next room, and instantly springing from his bed resumed his old position.

"Aha!" he said. "Now for the next act."

Kugel was dressed, and the boy was sitting on the edge of the bed awake and looking dazed.

"It's a terrible thing," said the former. "I don't see any way out of it at all. You would leave us last night; nothing would keep you. I thought you were sober enough to get home, and when I came out a quarter of an hour later, there you were on a kerb-stone, sound asleep, with your coat open, like that. So I just brought you home as you were."

Will Langton groaned. As yet he could only half understand. Then he pressed his hands to his head.

"I can't remember anything about last night at all," he said. "And my head is splitting."

"Poor old boy! Never mind. I'll stand by you—to the last I will. Look here, Langton. They won't believe at the office that you were robbed of that money—nobody would be such a fool as to believe that."

"Won't believe that I was robbed?"

"Most certainly not. There was a similar case last year of a fellow pretending to lose money. They charged him with it, and he was tried and found guilty. Five years he got."

Mr. Kugel forgot to mention that the two cases were not exactly similar, because in the former case it was clearly proved that the clerk had not lost the money at all, but had made use of it.

Will fell back on the pillow and buried his face in his hands.

"No, what you've got to do is this. I will go to the office and say nothing about you. You will stay here till I come home. The landlady shall bring you up some breakfast at twelve. You go to sleep again now. At four or five you shall have a chop; and you take good care not to stir from here till I come home again. And that may be latish. Don't sit up for me, but go to bed when you are sleepy. There's plenty of gin in the bottle, and there's the tobacco. And so now, old man, you stay here and be comfortable. Perhaps things will blow over, you know, after a bit; and then you can come out and look round again."

Langton acceded. He was so miserable, so ill, that he would have acceded to anything; and at the moment it seemed as if sleep was the one thing which he wanted. The misery before him, bluntly put by his adviser, fell with a dull pain upon his racking head, but he was too ill to understand. Lying down again, he fell asleep in a few moments.

Kugel covered him with a blanket, went out, gave some directions to the landlady, and left the house.

M. de Rosnay, still watching the case with a lively interest, hastily pulled on his boots, snatched his hat, and stole out after him, following on the other side of the street.

Through the streets of Soho to Holborn, along the stately Holborn to Newgate, from Newgate to Cheapside; then, turning down one of the narrow southern streets, the office of Ferris and Halkett. There the prey was run down; the sleuth-hound watched him enter, and then, going boldly straight in after him, called a porter standing at the gate, and asked him the name of that gentleman, pointing to the clerk.

"That is one of our German gentlemen," said the man; "Mr. Kugel his name is."

"Kugel! Ah, I was wrong. Pardon," said the Frenchman, with a strong foreign accent.

He had learned what he wanted to know—the name of this man of mysterious habits, and the place where he was employed. He retraced his steps slowly, thinking. The robber was a clerk in a City house, that was ascertained. Good; he could run him down whenever he pleased. Next for the boy.

This time he did not use the friendly

keyhole, but boldly opened the enemy's door and looked in. The lad was still, as he expected, sound asleep—heavily asleep; so steeped in slumber that he did not awake when the Frenchman put his hand into his coat-pocket and drew forth a letter, the creditor's missive, and read the name.

"Aha! Mr. William Lang-ton, Messrs. Ferris and Halkett. It becomes complicated, this affair. Situation. Two clerks in one bureau. Good. Ze young clerk gets dronk, ze more older clerk he r-r-rob him." He threw up his forefinger with a gesture of explanation mingled with disgust. "Tiens, tiens—what next? Next he hide ze money. Where? Sous le plancher—in ze ground. Bien, bien."

He went on his hands and knees and began to examine the planks beneath the window. It was quite easy to throw back the carpet and find the loose one; and beneath it, there lay the rouleau of gold and the packet of notes.

"What to do?" he asked himself. "What to do? If I leave the packet, he will perhaps come home and take the money and go. If I take the packet, one might suspect me—Bah! that is impossible—suspect Henri de Rosnay? That is foolish, that is absurd; I will take the money, I will watch for to-day and to-morrow. Aha! to-morrow, I will go to his office and denounce the true robber. End of act three, with fifth grand tableau."

He placed Will's letter and the packet in his own pocket and left the room, the boy still breathing the heavy sleep of intoxication.

It was pretty certain that his victim would not return till the evening—late, he had told the boy—M. de Rosnay, therefore, proceeded with his own business. First he went to the British Museum, where he wrote part of his letter to his Parisian paper. In it he threw out hints about being engaged in tracking to its end a dark and mysterious affair, which, in the hands of one less skilled in the tortuous workings of the human heart, would infallibly, he said, be a work attended with failure. "Let my readers of the fair sex," he added, "be reassured, this country is not Persia, nor is it France. It is money, not love; robbery, not jealousy; which lies below the plot of which I speak. And yet I promise for all a new, an original, a piquant story."

He went home at seven, for safety. No one was in the back room but the unlucky

boy, sitting with his head in his hand, a picture which would have moved the heart of the youthful Lacedæmonian far more effectively than a more common Helot. But no one else.

It was weary work, passing that long evening waiting for a man who did not arrive. But what would deter a French correspondent in the pursuit of something exciting? At eleven he got tired, however, and went to bed, with the resolution of waking up when he heard steps in the next room.

It was past two when the steps did awaken him. But there was nothing to see, because Mr. Kugel on getting home proceeded straight to bed.

CHAPTER VI. IS IT A DREAM?

It was not till twelve o'clock the next day that Langton's non-appearance began to excite remark. An hour later it was discovered that the money with which he had been entrusted was not paid into the bank. This was serious. A messenger was sent to his lodgings, for Langton was not, as his friend Kugel, one of those who love to bury their heads, ostrich-like, in obscure places. The messenger returned with the intelligence that he had not been home all night. Then a consultation was held, and the chief, Mr. Halkett, was informed.

Mr. Halkett was a man who did things on principle. He paid his clerks an ascending and regular scale of salary, which was not too much when you got to the top of it; he granted a fixed holiday of three weeks to everybody, and made them take it, just as some banks do, with the view of finding out any irregularities; he would have none but Churchmen in his employment, and was particular about the morals of his young men; finally, if anyone went wrong, he knew, without being told, that prosecution awaited him.

Mr. Halkett wrote a letter at once to Mr. Pomeroy, by whom the boy had been brought to him.

That was why, about three o'clock in the afternoon, young John Ashton, going out of his hotel, met, as she was coming in search of him, Lettice Langton, pale, trembling, and agitated.

"Oh, Mr. Ashton!" she cried, taking his hand, "if you cannot help me, no one can."

"If I can help you——" he began; but she interrupted him.

"My brother Will——" and then broke down.

"Come into the ladies' coffee-room, and tell me all you can."

There was no one in the ladies' room, and Lettice took a little courage from the sympathising silence of the mute furniture, to tell her story.

At half-past two a messenger came from Ferris and Halkett's to Mr. Pomeroy, asking if he could say where young Langton could be found, because he had disappeared and three hundred pounds with him. Mr. Pomeroy did not know; said he was busy; said that the boy's sister might know—handed the message over to her. Then the messenger told her the dreadful news.

That was the terrible story which Lettice poured into the ear of John Ashton. Could he find the boy—somewhere in this great London?

"It is a tough contract," said John Ashton to himself, thinking whether Sir Galahad, Perseus, Hercules, Ædipus, and a few other performers of mighty deeds, ever had a more difficult task before them. But at sight of the tearful face before him he resolved to do what he could to hunt up this boy, to trace him—if any trace of him could be found—step by step, innocent or guilty, until he could give him back to his sister, to be rejoiced over or wept over.

"Poor—poor Will!" cried Lettice. "Oh, Mr. Ashton, try to think that my brother is not—is not really bad! He cannot—oh, he cannot—have taken the money wilfully. Some accident may have happened; he may have lost it; he may——oh, I do not know what to think."

"Try not to think at all, Miss Langton," said John. "Let me think for you. Now, may I begin?"

"Yes, if you please."

"London is a big place, full of temptation. Your brother is only seventeen years of age; he lives in lodgings—all alone—at seventeen. There is no place for him to go in the evening; he may have got into bad company. You must not think too hardly of a boy left all alone. Let us try, first, to ascertain in what company he has been lately. Tell me, Miss Langton, have you any reason for believing that your brother was not—not quite steady?"

She hesitated, reddening.

"I should have said, yesterday—nothing. But now, I remember little things. He was always without money. He only had forty

pounds a year, but Mr. Pomeroy doubled that for him, and—and—and—he had all my money too.”

“All your money?”

“Very nearly all. Mr. Pomeroy gives me forty pounds a year for my dress, and poor Will borrowed, last year, nearly all that.”

“Humph! That makes a hundred and twenty. What did he pay for his lodgings?”

“He had a single room, with the use of a sitting-room, for five shillings a week.”

“I see,” John went through a little calculation. “Five shillings a week for lodgings; two shillings for breakfast; seven shillings for dinner; half-a-crown for tea and supper; a couple of shillings for washing; eighteenpence for sundries—that makes only fifty-two pounds a year. What do you think he did with the rest?”

“He had to dress himself.”

“Very well, fifteen pounds—sixty-seven pounds—leaving fifty-three pounds. What did he do with that fifty-three pounds—more than a pound a week?”

Lettice hung her head.

“Indeed,” she said, “I am afraid he spent it all on amusements.”

John Ashton was silent. There was, indeed, nothing to say. To this young backwoodsman, who spent nothing at all a year in drink, tobacco, or amusements, unless shooting is an amusement, the thought of a boy of seventeen, throwing away a pound a week in mere pleasures, with nothing afterwards to show for it, was simply dreadful, wild extravagance. He could hardly understand how such a lad could exist.

“First,” he said, “I must go to Ferris and Halkett’s. That is, Miss Langton, when I have taken you home, if you please. Perhaps, the boy may himself come round to see you. So be in the way; and I will do nothing else at all, until we have found him, somehow or somewhere.”

Lettice went away, strengthened with the thought that she was not left alone, and that someone was working for her and her brother. The dreadful thought that her brother might be guilty lost half its terrors—even though Mr. Pomeroy accepted the probability as a certainty—when her Canadian ally put her doubts into words, and showed her that many things might have happened besides—the ugly word which she did not dare to face. And, after all, Will had never shown any vicious inclinations! What poor Lettice did

not dare bring home to herself, was the fact that, although a dozen things might happen, as a matter of plain truth, generally only one thing ever does happen, and that thing is, that the clerk bolts with the money.

John Ashton, for his part, prepared for action by going to Ferris and Halkett’s.

Mr. Halkett, on hearing his visitor’s business, became more solemn than usual. It was an occasion for showing that Draconian impartiality for which the house was famous.

“We have,” he said, “four hundred employés. If we show leniency to one who departs from the straight path, probably the other three hundred and ninety-nine will follow in the sinner’s track.”

It is a plausible argument, and only breaks down in its weakest point, because it assumes that fear of punishment is the only deterrent from crime. As a matter of fact, most of the other three hundred and ninety-nine clerks would be found to have self-respect. Therefore, they would not take to evil courses, even though brother Barabbas escaped the clutches of the law.

“Well, sir,” said John, without intending any irreverence, “the Lord has got more than four hundred servants. If He were as unrelenting in the punishment of sins, where should we all be?”

“I hope, Mr.—Mr.—Ashton,” Mr. Halkett looked at the card, “I hope that you do not come here to shock my religious feelings.”

“Not at all, sir,” said John. “I want to know what you are going to do about young Langton.”

“Prosecute him,” said the merchant shortly. “Make an example of him for the benefit of his fellow-clerks. If he is not caught, or does not surrender within four-and-twenty hours, I shall issue a reward for his apprehension. That is what I am going to do.”

“Suppose I—suppose someone—were to come forward and say, ‘I will pay the money for him, on condition that you let him go’?”

“That would be of no use, none whatever.”

Mr. Halkett leaned back in an attitude of uncompromising virtue—you get that by throwing your head back, placing one hand on the arm of your chair, and the other straight before you flat upon the table. Try it!

“That would be of no use,” he repeated,

"What have we lost? Eighty-five pounds in gold, and notes, whose numbers are probably stopped. Nothing. What have we to gain by the prosecution of one clerk? The honesty of all the rest. Is that nothing?"

"Well, sir," said John Ashton, "you are the boss of this establishment, and you can do just as you please. But I pity this country if every boss is like you."

"What do you mean, sir?" cried Mr. Halkett, in a rage.

"I mean this, sir. First, that I will try to find the poor boy; and, guilty or not, if I find him, you shall not—depend upon that. Second, that you may call yourself a Christian, but you are not. Not the first elements of that religion about you, sir. The boy is missed; you conclude at once that he has stolen the money? How do you know that? You are going, on Christian principle, to act on that assumption, and parade his name all over England; and you refuse to accept, meanwhile, the restoration of the lost or stolen property. Good-morning, Mr. Halkett. If you come over to Canada, I'll give you a little more of my mind."

John strode away in a great rage. But wrath never yet found a missing clerk, and he began to think what he had better do.

First, he took a cab and drove to the boy's lodgings.

He lived in Featherstone-buildings, Holborn, having, like his friend Kugel, a single room. Unlike Kugel, he had a landlady who knew where he was employed, and what, too, was his daily manner of life.

John explained to the woman from whom and why he was come—the boy's disappearance, his sister's anxiety.

She hesitated a little, and then she told her tale.

"He was as good a lad as ever walked, I do believe," she said. "As good as he is handsome, until three months ago, when he got to know that Kugel."

"Who is that Kugel?"

"He is one of the sort that find their pleasure in smoking, drinking, betting, and low society," she went on. "One of the sort that get hold of young fellows like Mr. Langton and ruin them. I know him."

"Where can one find this Kugel?"

"I don't know where he lives now, but I know where you will find him most evenings, because young Mr. Langton, who's got no more deceitfulness in his disposition than that bit of wool, told me. He is

always to be found in the Connaught Music-hall, where the betting-men congregate to make their wicked bets, or in the Royal Leinster Arms, where they meet, them and their friends, to play billiards, and a pretty place that is for a young gentleman with a character."

Leaving a message with the woman for her lodger in case he should turn up, John sent a telegram to Lettice, telling her what he had done so far. After despatching his telegram he reflected that he could do nothing more till the evening, and that it would be much pleasanter to sit with Lettice, telling her all about it, than to sit alone. So he took a cab and drove to Great St. Simon Apostle, where he found the girl still trembling and wretched, sitting alone in her dismal room at the back of the house. Mr. Pomeroy was probably in his office, and John sat with her, none to say him nay, trying to pour comfort into her heart so full of misgiving. Of comfort there could be but little, but there was promise of help; and it was something for the desolate girl to think that she was not altogether without friends. There was this stalwart young fellow, so strong and brave, working for her. He was her friend; this man who but a week ago had been a stranger, her friend. Not a thought crossed her inexperienced and uneducated brain that he would ever think of being something more. Other girls, as perhaps she knew, had lovers and married; for herself, she never thought of such a fate. As well might the imprisoned canary-bird dream of the bright skies and breezy groves of the islands whence his ancestors were brought. The iron of her prison had entered into her soul. And yet—so receptive, so open to influence is the nature of a girl—already a new life was being born within her; new thoughts were crowding in her brain, new hopes. The dull monotony of her silent and friendless days was broken. She thought it was only interrupted; but it was broken.

"You have known me only a week," she said shyly, "and yet you are so kind. Are all Canadians like you?"

He did not say what rose up in his heart. It was no time to talk of love when she was in so dire a trouble; else he would have told her that his kindness did not spring from friendship, nor from his Canadian education, but from a deeper source, perhaps a more selfish one.

"We are old friends already, are we not?" he said; "just as if we had known

each other all our lives. And now it is half-past five, and I must go. Have hope, Miss Langton; to-morrow I will report what I have done."

"Hope!" she echoed, with the tears in her eyes. "Yes, I have hope while you are here. Everything seems easy; but when you are gone, and I am alone, then the misery begins. Poor Will! my poor, dear brother. Oh, he cannot—he cannot have—taken the money!"

"No! never believe that," said John, stoutly.

"Yet Mr. Pomeroy thinks so. And before you came I was having dreadful thoughts of—of policemen and trials; things one has read of. Oh, tell me," she passed her hand across her forehead, "tell me, is it a dream? Are you a dream? Will you pass away and leave me here again in this great, silent house where no one ever comes, and no one ever speaks? I used to have dreams in the daytime before you came. They crossed my brain when I was awake, and sometimes I did not know whether I was sleeping or walking in my sleep. And now I feel the same again, just the same as if I was walking in my sleep."

John caught her with both hands. He could have wept over the pleading eyes and weary voice.

"Lettice!" he cried; "I will never leave you alone again. I am no dream at least. Are these hands a dream? Did ever arms in dreams fold you round like this?"

She drew herself away, frightened and confused.

"Forgive me, Lettice," he went on. "But do not talk like that, you terrify me. Promise me that you will not let such thoughts dwell in your mind. Remember, I am your friend—no dream, unless we are all dreams together—if you will let me be your friend."

"Oh, if I will let you," she said; "I who have never had a friend before!"

He took her hand again, and held it while he conquered the passion that rose to his lips.

"And now I must go," he said, "to look for Will. Be patient until to-morrow."

CHAPTER VII. ASSAULT AND BATTERY.

In the billiard-room of the Royal Leinster Arms there sat, on the American-cloth-covered bench or divan running along one side of the room, a stranger. He was a tall, strong-looking young fellow, with

something of a foreign look about him. He was neither smoking nor drinking—which was in itself unusual—nor did he converse with any of the men who were playing. He sat perfectly still, apparently watching the progress of the game; and when invited to play he declined.

All the players, who met there night after night, knew each other, mostly by nicknames, and the presence of a man who knew no one and refused to drink, play, or smoke, was a *gêne*. They were mostly quite young men, of under five-and-twenty, though the countenances of some displayed precocity in the direction of ardent spirits. All had pipes in their mouths, and all were drinking. Their conversation was not governed by the restraints usual in society, and they were probably, as might be guessed by the topics on which they exchanged ideas, profound philosophers. At eight, or thereabouts, a light-haired man, rather older than the rest, wearing glasses, entered the room. He was greeted with a boisterous shout.

"Kugel!" At the name the stranger lifted his eyes and looked curiously at the new-comer.

"Kugel, at last. Where is young Langton?"

"I thought some of you fellows could tell me."

"Well, he is always with you; and you took him away last night. Precious drunk he was, too."

"No; he left before me," said Kugel.

"Why I walked downstairs with you both," persisted the first speaker.

"My dear fellow, how could that be, when I tell you that Langton left half an hour before me?"

"I suppose I was drunk too, then," the other laughed. "Because I've got a firm recollection of propping Langton up on one side while you helped him up on the other."

"What the deuce does it matter," cried a third, "who went out first? I daresay Langton will turn up some time."

Then the stranger, who was John Ashton, spoke.

"Are you, sir," he addressed the young fellow who said he had seen Langton and Kugel go out together, "certain of what you say?"

"Well, I don't know what concern it is of yours," he replied. "We are all friends here, and we don't know you."

"It concerns you all," said John, "in

this way. Langton was here last night with a bag of money in his coat-pocket, belonging to his employers, Messrs. Ferris and Halkett. He did not appear at the office this morning; he has not been home at his lodgings; he has not been heard of anywhere. It is therefore interesting for all of you, because you may be asked questions, to find out with whom William Langton left this room."

They looked at each other in silence. The situation was grave.

Then the one who had first spoken said, in quite a different tone:

"Kugel, you did leave the room with him—I remember it perfectly. Does no other fellow remember anything about it?"

No one did; but two or three seemed to think that they remembered in some vague way. Perhaps every man was anxious to shift a possible scrape off his own shoulders.

"And who are you, sir?" asked Kugel, "coming here to poke your nose into other people's affairs—a Yankee detective?"

No Canadian likes to be called a Yankee any more than the latter likes to be taken for a Canuk. It is a wholesome antipathy which helps to preserve the integrity of the empire. But John preserved his temper.

"I am here on behalf of the boy's nearest relative. I am going to look for that boy. If any of you are his friends, as you pretend to be, you will help me."

They looked at each other.

"Look here," said one of them; "if Langton has bolted with the money, or if Kugel has helped him off, and we get called upon to give evidence, it won't do any of us much good to have to state in a witness-box what we know about their goings on, and where we spend our evenings."

There was a general murmur of assent, and a movement towards the hats.

"Kugel," said the one who had helped Langton downstairs, "you may fight your own battles. You did go off with him; and I saw you turn the corner into Holborn with him. And that, if I must swear to it, I will. But as for the rest, I know nothing; and I'm not going to get the sack, if I can help it, from my religious firm by confessing to music-halls and billiard-rooms, and all the rest of it."

They laid down their cues, seized their hats, and dispersed, multivious. Kugel was about to follow, but John laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"Not so fast," he said. "You and I

must have a word or two before we part. What have you done with the boy?"

"I have done nothing with the boy. I know nothing about him, or his money either."

"Good. Are you going home?"

"Yes, I am."

"I will go with you."

Kugel looked at this stranger. He was taller than himself, broader in the shoulders, and stronger. Nothing was clearer to the German's mind than that, in case of a row, he would come off second best. Without a word he turned and walked down the stairs.

In the street he looked round. The Canadian was with him.

Side by side the two walked in silence along Holborn.

This was at nine o'clock.

At ten o'clock they were still walking side by side, neither speaking to the other. It was the German who spoke first.

"I hope you are not getting tired."

"Thank you," said John, with equal politeness; "I am not at all tired. I like walking in this cool night air."

"The rain, too"—it had begun to rain a little—"that refreshes, does it not?"

"It does," John replied, "especially when you have no overcoat."

There he scored, because his companion had none, while he was himself provided with that useful article.

At eleven, they were walking still, but faster, as if they were getting impatient and wanted to be at home.

They were in the neighbourhood of Soho. Suddenly the German stopped at a door. "You live here, then?" asked John.

Kugel rang the bell without answering; on its being opened he stepped in quickly, followed by John. They went upstairs, and John found himself in a room at the back, where sat two men engaged over some papers; they huddled them up and one of them crammed them hastily into his pocket.

"It's Kugel," he said with surprise. "What's the meaning of this, Kugel? And who have you brought here?"

"I don't know," said the German; "it's a man who follows me about and wants to find out where I live."

The two looked at each other; evidently something was wrong.

"He has," John explained, "kidnapped a boy who had three hundred pounds upon him."

The pair—they were both young men with preternaturally keen faces—turned to their friend for further explanation.

"It's a lie," said Kugel; "I know nothing about the boy."

"Then take me to your lodgings," John went on. "If you know nothing about him, why do you try to hide your address? Now, gentlemen," he said, "I don't know who you are, nor what your trade is; if you like to shelter this fellow, say so, and I'll raise mischief—for I'm bound to find out where he lives. If it comes to fighting, wild cats is the word."

Now the pair upon whom John had lighted were by no means warlike; also, there were many private reasons why they did not wish to be mixed up in any affair that might bring publicity; it is always unpleasant, for example, to be asked to explain how one has been employed for the last few years. They were, in fact, betting-men by profession, and to this they added such schemes of plunder as imagination, stimulated by intense love of ease and luxury, might suggest. At present they were concocting a method of preying on the credulous, which they afterwards matured, and by which they subsequently achieved fame. In fact their greatness has been recently published in every paper, was made the topic of leading articles by the ablest editors, and is now rewarded by a term of years in Portland.

"Well, Kugel," said one of them, after a pause, "you see, it isn't our plant. Kidnapping boys with money about them is a deuced awkward job. Perhaps," he looked at John furtively, "perhaps the gentleman would square the job—for a percentage?"

"Then I stay," said Kugel, sitting down.

"Wild cats," replied John, meaningly.

Here the two whispered together and one pronounced the verdict.

"We are not going to be mixed up in it, Kugel. That's positive. And, though we're sorry for you, we can't help ourselves. You must go."

"I stay here," repeated Kugel. He was already half dead with fatigue, and wet through with rain.

"Come, Kugel, we can't keep you—we can't and we won't. There."

"This is being pals," said Kugel.

"Well, as for the matter of that, we're not pals. If you had come to us by yourself something might have been done. As it's your own job—come, get out."

He saw that there was no longer any

chance, and reluctantly went down the stairs, John with him.

When their visitors departed, the two gentlemen of the turf sat down again to resume their calculations.

It was raining faster and the streets were quite deserted.

"Now," said John, "I am getting tired of this; will you take me home with you?"

"No."

"Then what I shall do is this: I shall wait till we pass a policeman, and as soon as he is well in sight, I shall commit an assault upon you. Then he will take us in charge; I can say who I am and where I live—and you must."

It was a notable device, and gratified at once the Canadian's desire to horsewhip the fellow, and to find out, as well, where he lived. Because by this time he was certain that the misery of walking about all night was a less evil to the man than the fear of letting anyone know the secret of his lodgings.

"You see this cane," he went on in a friendly way. "It's lighter than it looks and pretty flexible. It is a kind of cane which, laid across the shoulders, is calculated to curl round and bite into fleshy places in the arm. I should say you would find this cane hurt a good bit."

Kugel made no answer.

In a quarter of an hour or so after this speech a policeman appeared, slowly walking down the street.

"Better take me home," said John.

"No," replied the German.

"Then," said John, "if you will, have it." He lifted his arm and brought down the cane with such strength as he was wont to put into the handle of his axe upon Kugel's shoulders. As he anticipated, the cane curled round and caught the unlucky clerk in the fleshy part of his arm. Kugel yelled with pain. The policeman stopped and turned on his lantern. John repeated the stroke. The policeman was startled. Here was quite an unexpected affair. An assault by one quiet-looking man walking with another, apparently unprovoked, and under his very eyes!

"I give him in charge," cried the clerk; "I give him in charge for an assault. You saw him do it."

"Yes," replied the custodian of order; "I certainly saw him do it. What did you do it for?" he asked. "Come, better go home quiet, both of you. Past twelve o'clock, too, and a rainy night."

"Take him in charge," shrieked Kugel, stamping his foot with rage and pain.

The policeman hesitated.

"I surrender," said the Canadian. "Let us go to the police-office."

At the police-office a very unexpected thing happened. John thought that all he had to do was to give his name and address and come away. But he forgot one important point, that unknown persons charged with breaches of the peace are not, as a rule, allowed to walk away after the formality of writing down their names. And when John had seen his name entered, and proposed to walk away with an engagement for the next morning, he was disagreeably surprised at being informed that he had to pass the night in the lock-up.

This annoyance was aggravated by the delight of Mr. Kugel.

"You have taken his name and address too?" asked John.

That had been done; only when, next morning, John proceeded to hunt up the address given, which was at Hampstead, he found to his disgust that the astute Kugel had set down a street which did not exist.

"This," thought John, as he sat down on the stone bench in the lock-up, "this is a satisfactory termination to the evening. I am afraid I have made a mess of it; but I have not done yet."

He refrained from any mention of his reason for assaulting Kugel to the police-sergeant, because it might do harm to young Langton. Besides, as he reflected, he had only to get his address in the morning. Simple young Canadian! But the backwoods are not a congenial field for the study of human artfulness.

Passing the night in a lock-up, not alone, but in the company of other unfortunates, is not, as may be imagined, altogether without drawbacks. There were three companions in misfortune occupying the same cell with John. One of these was perfectly and completely drunk. He lay on his side, breathing heavily and quite unconscious. Another was a boy, who was asleep when John joined the company, but woke up to ask him, eagerly, what he was "run in" for. Hearing that it was an assault, he made remarks on some people's luck.

"You're a gentleman, you are," he added, as if that fact made things look any blacker for himself. "You'll be had up, an' the beak, he'll say as this is a

serious case, an' you'll be fined five quid or a fortnight. An' you'll pay the money and off you goes. What do they do with all the fines, they beaks? Has blows out, yar! An' then my turn 'll come. 'What's he bin an' done?' says the beak. 'I knows that boy's face.' 'Priggin' at the theayter-door,' says the peeler; 'a profess pickpocket, this boy is.' That's how they goes on—swears to it all, bless yer, as if it was gawspal truth. Then the beak, he'll say: 'Five years in a reformatory, yar!' It's just sickenin'—that's what it is."

Then he rolled round, and was off to sleep again in a minute.

There was another man; John couldn't see him, but he heard him from time to time groan as if in pain.

"What is it?" he asked. "Are you ill?"

"It is misery—ruin—prison and disgrace," he groaned. And then finding that there was a man who would listen to him, the wretched creature, who had been arrested that evening, poured forth the whole story of his crime and its detection.

A great weight fell upon the soul of John Ashton. The misery of the man became typical to him. He had seen the fast City clerk at his worst—in the billiard-room, and he had heard him at his worst—talking with his like. Now he was with him at the end of his course, in a police-cell. It seemed to him as if all were like this youth—low and coarse in every thought, cunning and unscrupulous in every action. The moral was the same with this poor detected swindler as with the fellow Kugel and Will Langton. Betting, billiards, drink, and the love of "pleasure." He shrank into his corner and wished himself back in Canada—provided Lettice was with him.

In the morning, when his case was called, no prosecutor appeared, and he was allowed to go away.

As for Kugel, he went home rejoicing. To be sure he had been cowed—the marks of that walking-cane were still upon his shoulders, and the pain of those cuts still burning on his arms. But his enemy was defeated; he had kept the secret of his rooms; and he went home at one o'clock in the morning gaily.

The Frenchman, who was sitting up, heard him return, and instantly prepared to take up his old position at the keyhole. The boy, who had not been out all day, was sound asleep. Through the keyhole the aspirant for dramatic success observed

the villain of the piece turn the clothes down and look at the boy's face.

"Will he murder him to-night?" he thought.

No; not that night, for he replaced the sheet and proceeded rapidly to undress. Then he got out his bottle of spirits, took a longish pull from the mouth of the bottle, and got into bed.

The Frenchman was disgusted. To-morrow, clearly, some fresh steps must be taken.

CHAPTER VIII. THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL.

"You have not found him, then?" cried Lettice in despair.

"No."

John narrated his ill-success, and the easy way in which he had been duped.

"Patience," he repeated, ending his narrative. "I am going to the office again. Perhaps something has turned up there."

"Patience." It was all he could say.

Mr. Halkett was engaged when he called at the office. Would he wait?

John sat down. It was the outside room; a sort of great entrance-hall, of the warehouse. There was a large counter, on which stood the smaller boxes waiting to be entered or examined before being sent away. Clerks were at work among them. Presently, John, getting tired of watching this part of the business, began to walk about the place. A swing-door with glass windows led into an inner room, where were fifty or sixty clerks all writing. John tried to work out a little sum in arithmetic, which occurred to him at the moment. So many offices in the City; so many thousands of clerks employed; all the clerks writing, writing without cessation; how much could one man write in a day? And, if all these men were always writing, where were the men who are always reading? And what was done with the books which they perpetually filled? And, as the generations run on, and England's prosperity continues, what is to become of all these books? And could not an arrangement be made between the Canadian and the British Legislatures to bridge over the Atlantic by means of the old office-books? Two thousand five hundred miles across—well, the ocean being three miles deep, to find the number of books necessary to make a roadway broad enough for a railway-train. It would take a good many, but not more, he began to think, than might be provided by a single generation of a million clerks, working for

say thirty years, six hours a day. He would have pursued this interesting research, but on looking through the glass doors, he was thunderstruck to see, among the clerks in the inner room, writing with the rest, his friend Mr. Kugel, the hero of last night's adventures.

Of course, he might have guessed as much. Where else would young Langton make friends so readily as in his own office?

This time, he resolved on telling Mr. Halkett all he suspected. At all costs it must be ascertained where the boy was gone to, even if it should lead to his arrest on a charge of embezzlement; but that, John thought, could be averted.

Meantime, Mr. Halkett was keeping him waiting a long time.

He could not help staring through the window at his companion of last night. Yes—there could be no doubt—a man with fair hair and spectacles, about the middle height. Kugel sat with his side-face only in view. He was industriously writing letters in German, with little suspicion that his enemy was only a dozen steps from him, and that the moment of detection had actually arrived.

For upstairs, with Mr. Halkett, was the French journalist. His knowledge of English was limited, but not so limited as Mr. Halkett's knowledge of French. And it was by gesture, by dramatic action, as well as by language, that he conveyed his information to the English merchant.

When he quite understood what had happened, Mr. Halkett rang his bell and sent for a policeman. The messenger despatched, he was ready to receive Mr. Ashton.

"You, mossoo," he said to the Frenchman, "will have the goodness to sit down by me and say nothing—nothing at all, for the present."

Mossoo complied. He understood that another act of the drama, probably containing the grandest tableau of all, was about to commence.

"Now, Mr. Ashton," said the partner, "you have found out something? You have a clue?"

John shook his head.

"Very little, sir, I am sorry to say. But I ascertained yesterday who was Langton's chief friend, and, to-day, I find he is one of your clerks."

"Ay—ay. That is something."

"It is a man named Kugel."

The Frenchman nodded.

"One of our foreign correspondence clerks. Pray go on, Mr. Ashton. Will you take a chair?"

"I found out where this man Kugel was likely to be found—a billiard-room—and I went there and found him. I asked him what had become of Langton. He refused to tell me, but it was proved that they left the place together, and that Langton was drunk."

"Dronk!" cried the Frenchman. "Mon Dieu! Nevare I see a man so dronk."

John looked astonished.

"Were you there, then?"

"Go on, pray, Mr. Ashton," said the partner. "And then?"

"As he refused to give any account of the boy, I told him I should follow him home. Now, Mr. Halkett, observe that if there were no reason why I should not follow him home, he would have made no objection. But what did he do? Walked the streets till one o'clock in the morning, and then, when I cowhided him, gave the policeman a false address."

"Oh! You—you cowhided—that is, you thrashed him, did you?"

"I did, sir. And now, Mr. Halkett, as I am sure that when we find out this clerk's lodgings, we shall learn where the boy has gone, or get upon his track, I have an offer to make you. I am not rich, but I have a few hundreds. They are my mother's property, but I can use them. I will pay you the whole amount by cheque, at once, if you will undertake to let the boy go."

Mr. Halkett hesitated. "You know," he said, "what I told you yesterday. This case, however, is different. I know more than you, my friend, as you will speedily find out. And I may tell you beforehand, that there will be no prosecution. The boy, whether guilty or not in intent, of which I know nothing, is innocent in reality."

"Thank God!" said John.

"And—if I may ask—what relation are you, sir, pray, to the boy?"

"None at all, sir; I have never seen him."

"Then what—what reason have you for proposing this generosity on his behalf?"

"A selfish one, Mr. Halkett. I want to take the boy back to his only sister, and I want to ask that young lady to marry me."

"Ah!" said the Frenchman, throwing up his hands. "It is beau-ti-ful. It is ravishing. It is a tableau for ze Porte St. Martin. Why do I give ze money? Am I fool? am I mad? No—it is not zat

I am fool. It is"—here he slapped his heart with emotion—"it is zat I lo-ove ze Engleesh mees. Tableau!"

Here the policeman was introduced.

"You will be good enough, policeman, to stand behind the screen until I touch the bell. You, Mr. Ashton, and you, mossoo, had better go behind the screen, too"—it was a big old-fashioned screen—"and you will all then wait there till I ring the bell. Then you can come out."

"A moi," cried the Frenchman, leading the way behind the screen. "You, Monsieur le Gendarme, here; you, monsieur, here; I in ze front. Hein? When ze bell rings, I am in front; I dash ze screen aside—so; it falls with a—how you say?—grand fracas. Tableau!"

This was exactly what happened. When Kugel was summoned into the chief's presence, a minute later, they were all there ranged behind the screen in safe concealment.

"I sent for you, Kugel, in reference to this affair of young Langton's."

"Yes, sir."

"I understand that you were his most intimate friend."

"I certainly was his friend," said Kugel.

"Can you throw any light on the affair?"

"Nothing whatever, sir, I assure you; I wish I could. He did tell me, walking away from the office, that he ought to have paid some money into the bank, but was too late."

"He did not say that he had the money upon him."

"No, sir, I did not ask him. I think it very unlikely that he would have carried all that money away with him."

"True; it seems unlikely. Well, you left Langton early that evening."

"We walked together to a place where I often stop for a cup of coffee"—oh, Mr. Kugel, and all that gin and water?"—"and there he left me."

"Did Langton, now, frequent billiard-rooms, music-halls, or places of that sort?"

"Not to my knowledge; but I could not say with certainty. It was not likely," he added, with a smile all sweetness and light, "that I should ever meet him at such places. My evenings are differently spent."

"I am glad to hear it. Then, Kugel, I am to understand that you know nothing whatever of this business?"

"Nothing at all, sir, further than what I have told you."

"And you cannot guess where William

Langton now is? Think. You were with him a good deal; can you not suggest any place where he might have fled to escape the consequences of his act?"

"I cannot form the least idea."

"He was in debt, it appears. A man has been here to-day asking for him, and stating that a promise was made that he should be paid yesterday—yesterday, the very day on which he disappeared. That makes the case look worse."

"I am surprised to hear that he was in debt," replied Kugel. "He did not tell me of it. But I think, sir, that you somewhat exaggerate my intimacy with Langton. I really know very little about him, certainly not so much as some others more of his own age in the office."

"Very well, then. I have no other questions to ask you. Come, Kugel," said Mr. Halkett, with a sudden change in manner, "you are lying. You know where young Langton is."

"I do not. And I am not lying," he replied doggedly.

"You know where he is, and you know where the money is. Will you give him up?"

"I do not know. I have not seen him since he left me on Wednesday evening."

"In that case——" Mr. Halkett struck his bell sharply.

The screen behind his chair was instantly drawn aside, and Kugel saw the enemy who had followed him so persistently the night before, a policeman, and a man whom he had never seen before.

He turned pale and trembled.

Then he remembered that he had given a wrong address. No one, at any rate, knew where he lived.

And yet they looked so confident and so certain, those two men—the one whom he knew, and the other, a black-haired man with sharp eyes, who stood with folded arms, and only advanced, as if he was on a stage.

In fact, the Frenchman was on a stage. This was his situation. A screen scene is not new on the stage, and Lady Teazle is not the only woman who has been hidden behind one. But it is always effective, and the Frenchman was thinking how the thing would look on the boards. In his own mind he represented that character so dear to all French novelists, playwrights, and poets—the instrument of Fate. He, a Frenchman, was bringing destruction and punishment upon a scoundrel, who was also a German.

It was delightful—it was sensational.

One drawback only interfered with perfect enjoyment of the situation. The Canadian was acting his part capitally, the Frenchman thought. As a matter of fact, John was simply looking with some kind of pity mixed with wonder at the culprit, who he felt sure was about to be exposed. Now when an actor succeeds in looking natural he acts well; but the grouping was spoiled by the policeman, who had no dramatic talent whatever, and stood as if he were a machine or a soldier at drill.

"Now, Mr. Ashton," said Mr. Halkett, "we are going in search of this lost boy. Kugel will be taken with us."

They went downstairs, a procession of five, headed by Mr. Halkett. The middle man of the five was Kugel, who said nothing. Great astonishment was excited in the office when it became known that Kugel had gone off with the chief, with a policeman, and with two strangers, in a cab. Everybody connected this unwonted business with young Langton, but opinions were divided as to the meaning of it. And the busy pens stopped for a few minutes while the writers laid their heads together and whispered. For some thought that Kugel was proved to be an accomplice in the embezzlement, and others thought that he had found out where Langton had hidden himself and told Mr. Halkett—which seemed mean; others, again, thought that the strangers had brought information to the office, on which Kugel would be called to give evidence. A kind of awe, not without a certain pleasantness of its own, fell upon all in the office that morning. One among them—one of the youngest—was suspected of a grievous crime; another might be concerned in it. The disgrace of those two fell on the young men's hearts as a note of warning, and those who owed debts, or had bad consciences, resolved on immediate reform.

Meantime the Frenchman sat on the box beside the driver, and within the cab were the other four, all perfectly silent.

In Kugel's lodgings sat poor Will Langton alone, as perfectly miserable as a boy can well be. His adviser recommended him to lie close, and not to stir out of the house under any circumstances. He could not if he wished, because he had no hat, and his coat had been slashed and cut by the robber who stole the money. It is not healthy to sit for forty-eight hours in a bedroom on a ground-floor back, afraid even to open a window for fear of being

seen. Add to this the wretchedness produced by disordered liver—one result of that fatal night's intoxication—by too much tobacco, and by the ever-gnawing pain of a reproaching conscience. It was to this misery that Kugel's counsels led him. And what would Lettice—poor Lettice!—say? What would be her agony and shame when the thing was known to her?

How, too, could he get away? He had no money, Kugel had no money. And if the latter could find any, where could he go? To America? But he must first elude the police, who, as Kugel told him—lying in this as in everything else—were already searching for him. There were no books to read, because the tenant of that room cared for nothing in the way of printed matter but the betting intelligence and the faces of cards. So that the prisoner had to sit in an almost intolerable solitude, with no other resource but to smoke, eat, and drink.

He was doing none of these things when the cab drove to the door. He was sitting with his head in his two hands at a table, gazing vacantly before him, trying in vain to find some solitary gleam of comfort; and the tears were rolling down his face. Should he write to Lettice? Should he at least tell her that he was innocent, but afraid to leave his present asylum? And then he started to his feet in terror, because he heard steps in the hall, and because these steps were coming straight to his own door.

The first who entered was Mr. Halkett himself—the man of all men he most dreaded. Behind him came a policeman—and at sight of him the boy dropped his head upon the table and sobbed aloud. He did not wait to see who came after. It was enough for him that he was to be apprehended, because the civil power was present in the flesh.

"Langton," said Mr. Halkett, "stand up, sir, and tell me about this."

He stood up and brushed away his tears.

"I lost the money, sir." Here he saw his friend.

"You here, Kugel!" he cried.

"Tell us, Langton," repeated Mr. Halkett, "how you came here, and why you are staying here."

"Kugel brought me," he replied. "Kugel told me that no one would believe me if I said that I lost the money, and that a warrant was out for my arrest. So I was afraid to go away."

"Kugel brought you here?"

"Yes. I was—I was——" Here the boy

hung his head for shame. "I was drunk, and did not know what happened. And in the morning I found myself lying in the bed. And oh, Mr. Halkett, I am not guilty. Indeed—indeed—I am not. See, my coat was cut and torn like this. I found it so in the morning. And all the money was gone."

"Why was not the money paid into the bank?"

"I was sent out at half-past three, and on the way met Kugel, and we stopped to talk. And he had to tell me that Cassandra had lost the race."

"Cassandra? Cassandra lost——"

"The Cambridgeshire stakes. We had both backed the horse. Kugel advised me. I should have won twenty pounds, because the odds were twenty to one. And Kugel would have won a hundred."

"Oh!" said Mr. Halkett, getting interested. "And so Kugel bets, does he? Before we go any farther, tell me where you generally spend your evenings."

The boy blushed again.

"Sometimes we go to music-halls and sometimes to play billiards."

"You and Kugel. Go on. Why did you not return the money to the cashier?"

"Because it was half-past four when I got back, and I thought I would step round in the morning and no one would know. I was afraid to tell him I was too late."

"Who knew of your having the money upon you?"

"Only Kugel, unless I told anybody else when I—got drunk."

"A lad who confesses to being a drunkard——"

"No, sir; no. It is the only time in all my life."

"To be afraid of telling the truth, to waste his evenings in low haunts, to bet upon horse races—do you think that lad a fit person to remain in my office?"

Will Langton made no reply.

"Now, sir," he turned to Kugel, who was sitting down with an air of great composure. "First of all, you are dismissed my service."

"Very good," said Kugel. "Go on."

"Next you are given in charge for robbing this boy, Langton, of the money which he has lost."

Kugel laughed. But it was rather an uneasy laugh.

"Prove it," he said. "Prove it. I find the boy drunk on a doorstep, I pick him up and carry him home in a cab. He was robbed already when I picked him up."

"They left the billiard-room together," observed John. "That I can prove."

"Listen," said Mr. Halkett, "to a plain tale. Would you repeat," he asked the Frenchman, "would you repeat the story you told me?"

The Frenchman took up a position within the door. It was a small room, and a good deal crowded by the presence of so many, so that there was not much scope for dramatic action. But he proceeded to get as much effect out of the narrative as possible.

"It is midnight. Ze bells have struck ze hour. Ze streets are silent. It rains, and those who sleep not hear ze dropping upon ze stones. Hark! A voiture—a cab. Ze door open himself. A step of foot make himself to hear. A step of foot which carries—aha! What do that step of foot carry?"

"Idiot of a Frenchman," cried Kugel. "Go on. I carried the boy to bed, because he was drunk."

"It is very well," replied the narrator. "I proceed, I am idiot of Frenchman, am I? We shall see."

"On ze bed that boy," he pointed to Will Langton, "lies, his face is red and—what you say?—gonflé, because he has drunk ver much pell-ell. His eyes are half shut—so—and he breathe—so—hunc, grunc. Nevare I see a boy more drunk. Then our dear friend who call me idiot of Frenchman, he opens ze cabinet, hein? like this"—he opened the common lodging-house chiffonier which stood against the wall; "he take out bottle—en effet—this bottle—and make a glass half gin half water. He give this to ze boy. Then, that boy's eyes shut tight—so—he breathe more 'ard—hunc, gr-r-r-unc—he is more drunk than before, and he knows nozing—nozing at all."

He paused at this point, and replaced the bottle, which, as a theatrical property, had no longer any use in the drama.

"He next, my dear friend from Gairmony, whom we lo-ove to see, especially when he calls a Frenchman idiot, he takes a pocket-knife—see—like this, perhaps it is ze same knife;" it was in the drawer of the chiffonier, he took it out and opened it. "And by this knife he cuts ze buttons off ze boy's coat—so—and cuts ze boutonnières—so—" he imitated the action on his own coat. "Afterwards, he puts ze buttons in ze tiroir of ze cabinet—here is one—aha! and here is ze ozer;" in fact the two buttons were lying there. The policeman

compared them with the buttons on Will Langton's coat, and then slipped them into his own pocket. "Afterwards, he takes a sac—a bag—out of ze boy's pocket—so—he opens ze sac, he takes out what is inside it, he lays it all on ze table—so. There is papers, notes, billets de banque; there is gold, a pile, a heap, a leetle mountain of gold—he counts it all—and when it is counted, he hides it away. Where does he hide it?"

He looked all round for an answer to this question, but no one, not even Mr. Kugel himself, ventured one; the Frenchman went on.

This time he addressed himself to Kugel, whose face was of a deathly pallor.

"Where did he hide it? Aha, voleur, tell to us where did he hide it? In ze bed? No. Shall I tell ze respectable Mr. Halkett where he hide that money?"

He stepped across the room, and felt for a moment or so with his feet. Then, assuming an attitude of commanding superiority, coupled with tragic gloom, he said to the policeman, "Lift up ze carpet; find a timber which permit himself to be elevated. There is ze money!"

John Ashton comprehended, though the policeman did not; and lifting the carpet began to search about the planks.

Here Kugel lost his temper, and began, I regret to say, to use strong language. He said that it was very clear that a conspiracy had been got up against his character, the meaning and nature of which he should make it his business to enquire into; that he knew nothing about the money which might be there or might not. That this was all the reward he got for harbouring an ungrateful sneaking boy who was afraid to go back to his work. That those who expected anything from Englishmen, especially when they allied themselves with Frenchmen, were beneath the contempt of thinking men (I omit all the garnish and ornament of his speech); and that—but here he was interrupted by a cry of astonishment from John Ashton. The "timber which permitted himself to be elevated" was found, and the policeman searching beneath it found—nothing. They lit a candle and looked again—nothing!

Then Kugel changed his tone again, and became triumphant.

"Here is a very pretty end to your fine conspiracy," he said. "Now, Mr. Halkett, produce your proof! A mad Frenchman invents a story for some purpose of his

own, which you believe at once without enquiring into the circumstances. I give you notice, Mr. Halkett, great City man that you are, that I will bring an action against you for conspiring to ruin my character. You and everyone in this room shall be the defendants. I will ruin you all."

"Aha!" cried the Frenchman, turning up his shirt-cuffs, for this was the grand coup de théâtre that he was about to play. "We have not yet finished the drama. Your money, Monsieur Halkett—it was in notes and gold—ow mosh?"

"Three hundred pounds."

"Be-old your money!" He unbuttoned his coat and drew out of the pocket the bank bag. "Count your money. Hein? You think"—he turned to Kugel—"you think ze fool of Frenchman so great fool as leave ze money for you to take? No, no. Monsieur Halkett, is your money right?"

"It is quite right, sir; and I beg that you will allow me to thank you very much for your prompt and vigorous action. Policeman, you have seen enough to warrant the arrest of this man. We will, if you please, go straight to the Mansion House."

"It is finished," said the Frenchman, regretfully. "Ze play is over; let fall ze curtain; make ze gas to descend; let us all go away."

The play, so far as his tableaux were concerned, was certainly over. For Mr. Kugel it threatened to be just beginning.

"Mr. Halkett," said John Ashton, "you have the money. The attempts of this man to steal it have been frustrated. Will it not be a sufficient punishment that he can never obtain another situation in the City, and that his character is gone? Let him go free."

Mr. Halkett hesitated. To be sure, the house had lost nothing; and the robbery story depended wholly on the evidence of the Frenchman, who might break down.

"Go, sir," he said at length. "Rid us of your presence. You are free, so far as I am concerned."

Kugel put on his hat and disappeared without a word. As I have heard nothing since about him he has probably returned to his native country, and is now, perhaps, English corresponding clerk in Berlin. But that is mere conjecture.

"And as for you, Langton," said Mr. Halkett, "you have had, I hope, a sufficient warning. You may return to your duties to-morrow; but I shall keep my eye upon you."

"No, sir," said John Ashton. "We thank you, but this boy must not return to your house. First of all, he would have to explain too much and fight against suspicion half his life. But if you will kindly inform the clerks publicly that Kugel is the only guilty person, and that the money has been recovered, it might do Langton great service. There are other reasons why he must not go back to your service."

"What are they?"

"How many clerks have you? Four hundred, we will say. Do you ever consider the lives these clerks live at home? Do you know what temptations there are in this great city for any young man?"

Mr. Halkett was silent.

"Of all young men in the world," John went on, "I should say there are none so much tempted as the clerks who have to live alone in lodgings."

"How can I help them?"

"I do not know, sir. What I do know is that you have not tried. Forgive my plain speaking, Mr. Halkett. People say you are a good man. Do something to show it for your servants."

CHAPTER IX. FATHER AND SON.

JOHN took possession of Will Langton as if the boy belonged to him.

"Come-with me," he said; "I will take you to my hotel, where we will get you a new rig-out instead of that torn coat, and where your sister can come to see you."

"Who are you?" asked Will, rather frightened at this exhibition of strength.

"Never mind that now. Come; let us get out of this place as fast as we can. Faugh! I feel as if I was being choked. What are you waiting for?"

"I can't find my pipe and tobacco-pouch."

"Your what? Your pipe? Here's a boy of seventeen pretends he wants tobacco. Come!"

He took the lad by the arm. He was rather a scarecrow to look at, in spite of his shapely features and pink-and-white complexion, being attired in the coat whose buttons were cut off and button-holes slashed, in which he had slept two nights, and in which, during that fatal night of drink, he had rolled about in mud and dust. His linen was yellow, his collar broken and creased, and he had no hat at all.

"I don't know," said John, doubtfully, "whether you are worth all the trouble we have had about you. You may be, because

your sister is fond of you; though how anyone with a grain of self-respect could call himself a friend of that—that fellow”—John cast about for a strong word; but, as he did not possess the trick of swearing, none other occurred to him—“that fellow, Kugel, beats me altogether.”

He got the boy outside the house at last—the Frenchman was gone back to the British Museum, where he was writing a magnificent London letter to his editor, called *L’Affaire Kugel*—and found a cab to take them back to the Queen’s Hotel, St. Martin’s. On the way he stopped to make Master Will a little more presentable; and at last, it being then two o’clock in the afternoon, John was able to deposit the boy in the coffee-room, under strict promise not to leave the hotel, and to hasten to Lettice with the news.

“I told you,” he said, “to have patience and hope.”

She looked up wearily. It was one of those bad days when everything seemed dreary to her, and there was not even hope left in the bottom of the box.

“Patience! for how long?” she asked. “Hope! for what?”

“For everything, Miss Langton. You need not hope any more; nor be patient any longer. For what you prayed for has come to pass.”

“Not—that he is innocent?”

“Yes; that he is innocent! Your brother’s innocence is proved; the lost money is found; the guilt is fixed on the right person; we have discovered him; and at this very moment—at least, I think so—Mr. Halkett is announcing to his clerks that Langton has been proved no thief or embezzler.”

She clasped her hands together. It was almost too much, in the low vitality to which her sedentary life had reduced her, to receive all at once. She burst into tears.

“Oh my poor Will! my dear Will! But I do not understand—Mr. Ashton, are you quite sure—quite, quite sure?”

“Quite,” he said, smiling. “There is no room for doubt. Your brother is safe at my hotel. The lost money has been found and restored. It is as clear as the day that Will was robbed.”

“Oh, let me go to him.”

“Presently,” said John. “Not just yet. Although the boy was innocent of the crime imputed to him, he was not, I am sorry to say, innocent altogether. I mean,” he added hastily, because her face put on

suddenly a pitifully-pained look which went to his heart—“I mean that his sins were only those into which a boy, greatly tempted, might easily fall. He had got into bad hands; he was made to go out, night after night, to low places—places which you have never heard of.”

And then he told her all, while Lettice shed tears of gratitude and joy.

“What can I say to you, Mr. Ashton?” she sobbed. “I am so grateful—so very grateful—and so happy?”

“And yet, only five minutes ago, you were looking out of that prison window, wondering whether there was any room left for hope.”

“Yes, it seems so easy, in this quiet house, to lose all hope. Listen! Do you hear any sound at all?”

In the heart of the City; in Great St. Simon Apostle; close to Carmel Friars; in the back room looking out on a blank wall, there was no sound of any kind. The rumble of cabs and carts fell not down that dry well; the noise of hurrying footsteps was not heard there. All was silent and still as death.

“And you have sat here, day after day, all by yourself, for all these years?”

“All by myself,” she echoed. “It is very silent, is it not? And sometimes, as I told you yesterday, I do not know whether I am asleep or awake—whether I dream, or whether I see.”

“Poor girl!” he took her hand in his—a passive hand, thin and transparent. “Poor Lettice! Will you let me tell you my scheme for everybody—for you as well as for Will?”

“For me?”

I declare that she had no thought at all, not the slightest thought of love or love-making. That any man should ever come to woo her was not a thing to be thought of for a moment. To be sure she seldom used her mirror, and never with any real feminine understanding; else she might have dreamed another kind of dream.

“Listen, Lettice. Let me call you Lettice, if only for to-day. I must go back to Canada. I promised my mother to return in the spring. But I have seen all I want to see. I have done all I want to do—except one thing. And I should like to get back to the dear old place in the winter, before the ice breaks up and the snow melts. But I cannot bear to leave you here behind, all alone in this cruel place with no one to speak to. It is dreadful. Lettice, come with me.”

"Go with you—to Canada? Mr. Ashton!"

"My name is John," he replied. "I am only a farmer; only a man who farms a two-hundred-acre lot, but we can live upon it. Oh, I have no fear. Everybody does well who can work, and does not drink, in Canada—the best of all countries the world can show. Come with me, Lettice."

She looked at him with surprise. How could she go with him?

"My dear," he went on; "let me say what is in my heart. I love you so that I am afraid to say it. Come with me and be my wife."

"Your wife, Mr. Ashton—your wife? Ah no—it cannot be."

"Why cannot it be?"

"Because—because," she buried her face in her hands and burst into tears; "because I am disgraced, Will and I."

"Disgraced! But I told you he was innocent."

"That is not it. Our father—I told you once we had a great sorrow—he was found dead in a field. He had committed suicide. And they discovered the reason—that he had—oh, the shame and disgrace—he had taken some money."

She hid her face in her hands.

"No one would do anything for us except Mr. Pomeroy. Stern as he is, he has been very kind; because he has kept both Will and me from the workhouse."

"But that is not disgrace, my dear. Oh, Lettice, it is not you who did this—it was your father. What do I care—what would anyone out there care, even if they knew, which they do not? Come to me, my love, my dear. Come out with me and be my wife."

"Oh, I dare not," she murmured. "You ask me because you pity me."

"No, no; it is not that. I do pity you, God knows, I pity you with all my heart. I should be less than human if I did not pity you, my poor, poor Lettice. But I love you too. Oh, my dear, when I think of your sweet face looking up in mine when we drove through London streets—your soft, beautiful eyes—Lettice, come to my arms!"

He drew her towards him, and she fell unresisting upon his breast, while he kissed her a thousand times with every name of endearment and love. She trembled in his strong grasp, but through her heart there ran a new and sweet feeling of protection and safety. He was her king; he would keep her safe; he would

take her out of this prison into the world of light and life; they would go away together, Will with them, to a country where no one would know her history, or, if they learned it, would only pity and not scorn her. She would forget, in that country of clear skies and sunny weather, the brooding fancies which were dragging her imagination down into the dust. There should she learn the joys of a sweet pure life, set all round with affection and guarded by her husband's love. John was eloquent, as a man in love can always be; his burning words poured into her soul and waked a new and strange life in her heart. All in a moment she comprehended the full dreariness of her past, the full desolation of the future—without the man who held her in his arms. All in a moment love awoke in her heart full grown.

"You will come with me, Lettice?"

"I will go with you, John," she whispered, "if you will take me."

Presently he drew away gently, leaving her blushing and ashamed. Oh, the change that had come over that pale, sweet face, pale no longer; the new light in those sad eyes, sad no longer; the brightness of that clouded brow, clouded no longer. Love, the conqueror, is also Love, the giver of beauty; Love, who puts life into the statue, and a soul into the cold marble.

"I have one more thing to do," said John. "It is the thing for which I came to England. Will you forgive me, beforehand, for deceiving you, Lettice?"

"How have you deceived me—John?" She spoke his name with a little hesitation. It was so strange and new, this feeling that she had given herself away, and was no more free—strange and sweet, the bonds of love!

"It is a deception which has done you no harm, my dear. But now, I wish I had not consented. It would have been better perhaps to have come here with my true name, and shown myself in my true colours."

"Your true name, John?"

"Yes, dear. My name is not Ashton at all. What it is I will tell you in a few minutes. Is Mr. Pomeroy in his office, do you think?"

"I believe so. He seldom leaves it during the day."

"Then wait for me, Lettice, a few minutes only. I am going to bring him here, and tell him in your presence what I have to tell him."

Mr. Pomeroy was sitting at his desk,

engaged, I believe, in the soul-elevating work of making out bills of costs. Nothing so develops the best and most generous side of a man's character as that form of labour. I believe that lawyers who have a good deal of this work to do always employ young men of broad benevolence and philanthropic aims, whose object in life is to advance the name of humanity by an example of private generosity.

"Can I interrupt you for a little while, sir?" asked John.

Mr. Pomeroy looked up from his work. His white stubbly hair stuck up all over in a more determined manner than ever; perhaps because he was insisting in his bills on more than a usual amount of generous consideration; and his sharp keen eyes were sharper than ever.

"Interrupt me?" he replied. "Yes, if it is a matter of business; not otherwise. These are business hours."

"It is a matter of very important business. Not a money transaction, but much more important."

"Now that's nonsense, Ashton," Mr. Pomeroy replied, good-humouredly; "only a very young man, like yourself, could say that any transaction could be important which was not connected with money. Love and affection, I suppose you would say. Stuff! no one loves anybody but himself in the world. If they pretend otherwise, make the proper deductions—the largest deductions—and go on your own way."

"Well, sir, you will see. First of all, you will be glad to hear that young Langton has been found. He did not steal the money, which was stolen from him, and has all been recovered."

"Why did he not pay it into the bank?"

"He stopped talking in the street till it was too late. Mr. Halkett has very kindly promised to inform the servants of the firm of his innocence. But he will not go back there, and I want your sanction to his going out to Canada with me."

"To Canada? Well, it would take him out of the way."

"You do not like the boy?"

"I dislike all boys. Remember, Ashton, these two children of my old friend Langton, who, as perhaps you know, got into a mess with his accounts and cut his throat, have no claim whatever upon me. Because he was my friend once, and because he once did me a great service, I have educated his orphans. The girl behaves

well; she never talks, and gives no trouble. Take him by all means. He is now about seventeen. I have been allowing him forty pounds a year. I will give him—no, I will give you for him, which will be better—that amount paid in advance for four years. I never intended doing anything for him after he was one-and-twenty. So that is settled."

"Then you do trust me, sir? Remember, you know very little about me. You have only known me a fortnight."

"I do trust you, Ashton. At least I believe that you are what the world calls honest. Of course you have got your own purposes to serve, else you would not have come over and forced yourself upon me. Well, I have taught you something, and you have pleased me by your talk. It is not often that one gets a man unspoiled by town life. It is refreshing. I confess that, though I am not a soft man, as you have found out——"

"At all events you are never tired of saying so."

"No; I warn people beforehand. There is nothing soft about John Pomeroy." He banged the table with an air of decision. "Nothing soft in this office, young man. You come here, state your business, pay your money, and go. However, we waste time. Come to the important point—important—without money being concerned in it. Ho! ho!"

"It is so important, sir," said John, hesitating, "that I must ask you to come with me into your private room, and to hear what I have to say—out of this office. I have a reason for this request. What I have to say has nothing to do with business—nothing whatever. It belongs to your private life."

"Well, well; you are a persistent lad. Have your own way."

Mr. Pomeroy locked his office-door very carefully and followed John into the room at the back, the room which was Lettice's cage and his own dining, breakfast, and only sitting-room.

"Lettice," said Mr. Pomeroy, "we have to talk business, Mr. Ashton and I. Will you leave us here alone?"

"No, Lettice," said John, "do not leave us; my business very nearly concerns Lettice, Mr. Pomeroy. And to show you that it does, I must first tell you that she has this morning promised to be my wife. Will you let me take her away, with her brother, to Canada?"

"This was your important business, was

it?" asked Mr. Pomeroy. "Well, you are young. You think that marriage is the only business worth anything in life, I suppose. Ah, what enormous deductions! Only an episode at best, and generally an unpleasant one. Well, Lettice"—his voice was not unkind, though it was cold—"what do you say?"

"I have promised," she said, "to go with him."

"Well, then, you will go, of course. You understand, Ashton, from what I have told you, that neither Lettice nor William Langton has any expectations from me—none whatever. My money will not be left to either of them."

"I quite understand that, sir; and in Lettice's name I thank you for the kindness you have shown both to her and to her brother——"

"There—there—gratitude—professions—deductions, deductions. You will not have any wedding fuss; no bridesmaids or nonsense, you know, Lettice. You can go and get married any morning you like. If I have time I will give you away. If not, the clerk can do that just as well. Wedding-bells, indeed! If most people knew what was before them, the bells should be a knell; a mourning-coach should be the bride's carriage; and the guests should all be dressed in black, with crape gowns and hatbands! Wedding-cake and rejoicings! Pah!"

This was not encouraging, but John only laughed, and put his hand round the girl's waist.

"We shall do our rejoicings across the pond, Mr. Pomeroy. Our wedding-bells shall be the bells of the sleigh in which I shall take my bride home; the snow shall be the white cover of our wedding-cake; and the maples in the forest our wedding-guests. Cheer up, Lettice dear, there will be rejoicings enough in the new country over you and me, and songs and dances, too, and joy for all our lives."

"Poor things," sneered the man of experience. "When do you propose to begin this—this pilgrimage of sleigh-bells and snow?"

"We will be married as soon as we can," said John. "But that, too, will depend upon you."

"I will have nothing to do with it, I tell you."

"Wait a moment, sir; I have other business. Sit down and listen." They had been all then standing. "You said, when you first saw me, that my face and

my voice reminded you of someone. Of whom, sir?" He bent down, looking full into Mr. Pomeroy's eyes.

"Of—of one I lost, many years ago."

"Of one you loved many years ago, and whom you—drove away!"

"She left me, in her guilt."

"She left you, in her innocence."

"Who are you, sir?" cried Mr. Pomeroy, springing to his feet. "Who are you? and what do you know?"

"I know nothing but that fact, that she is innocent. Whose is my face?"

"It is hers," the man murmured.

"And yours," said John. "I am her son—and yours. Yes, father—it is true! I have come from Canada to tell you that you have a wife living who has long since forgiven you, that you have a son who stands before you, and that I bring with me papers which I have not read, because that would be to think of my mother what is impossible; but papers which will prove to you what I have said. She left you, driven away by you, in her innocence. And a few months later I was born. Lettice dear, that is my deception. In marrying me you will marry the son of your benefactor."

Mr. Pomeroy, as he listened, trembled. For four-and-twenty years he had been alone, brooding over an imaginary wrong, feeding an insatiable wrath with thoughts of revenge which might have been, a man-hater and a woman-hater.

"Prove your words," he said, "prove your words. How do you know you are my son?"

"You might know," replied John, "by my face and my voice. These letters will tell you more than I can prove. If they are not proof, I have no more to say; I shall then leave you, as I found you, a stranger. If they are proof, you have a son and a wife."

"Give the papers to me."

"Before I give them, think. I am here asking nothing, claiming nothing. As regards your money, I do not know whether you are rich or poor. And as I ask nothing of you, so I owe you nothing. For the care of my childhood, for my education, for my farm, I owe you nothing, and my mother everything. Remember, then, that I am on her side, whatever you think of these letters."

"You are frank, young man. Before I was your age I had learned to pay respect to my father."

"You forget, sir; I have never had one."

Mr. Pomeroy took the bundle and tore

it open. It was tied round with green tape, which he hastily untied, and began to read them one by one. There were four of them altogether.

John stood watching him. Lettice sat beside John, waiting for the end.

When Mr. Pomeroy had read them through he began again, and read them all over more carefully.

"I know the handwriting of each," he said. "These are no forgeries. These may, however—but, no—that cannot be. What is your name?" he asked, suddenly.

"John."

"John Pomeroy. My name, too. You are my son."

"And my mother?"

"I will write to her myself. There are things to say which no one but myself can say. She has been—deeply—wronged," he added, slowly. "You do not know the contents of these letters?"

"No, sir."

"You do not know the cause of our estrangement?"

"No, sir."

"Better not. There are four documents here. The first is from Eli Ramsden, the Quaker, to your mother, stating what he knew; it is not much, but it is something. The second is an account drawn up for her by her brother, Stephen Burdcomb. The third is your mother's own account. And the last is a letter written on the morning of the day when he died, by the man who— Ah!"

He almost shrieked as he uttered the last word, and his eyes fell on Lettice.

"The man who—the man who did the mischief—who lied, and calumniated, and made up a story against the woman he had wished to marry; the man who ruined my home out of revenge—that man—that man——" his face grew purple, and his eyes shot fire, "that man was your father. Do you hear, you girl—your father?"

John laid his hand on Lettice's shoulder and kept it there.

"Patience, Lettice dear," he whispered.

"You, whom I took out of the gutter and have brought up—do you hear? Daughter of a bankrupt, swindler——"

"Stop, sir. This is my future wife—your son's future wife."

"Never," said his father. "Go; leave my house within a quarter of an hour; starve; beg your bread, or steal it, for what I care. Go from my house."

"If Lettice goes it shall be with me," said John.

"Oh, John, John," cried the poor girl, "I told you we were disgraced; but I did not know of this. Yes, sir, yes; I will go. It is not right that I should stay any longer under your roof, nor that I should think of marrying your son. Forgive me, sir. I did not know. Indeed, indeed, I did not know."

"My Lettice!" cried her lover, catching her in his strong arms as she rose in her agony and terror, and holding her tight to his heart. "Do you think I would let you go? Is this bygone history to part you and me?"

"John, I cannot. Think of your mother."

"Yes," said his father. "Think of your mother, if, in the headstrong stream of passion, you can think at all. How will it be to go out to your mother and say, 'Here is your new daughter; the girl whose father ruined your happiness?'"

"That is not what I shall say to my mother. I shall say, 'Lettice is the innocent daughter of a man who wronged you and died repentant.' Lettice, you do not know my mother, or you would not let that be a plea. You, sir, have forgotten her."

"You are my son," said Mr. Pomeroy. "I did not think I had a son. I hardly knew—I did not care—if I had a wife. But hear me. Choose between me and that girl. Henceforth I shall think of her with the hatred that belongs to her father. Take her and leave me—never to see me again. You shall be dead to me. I give the same choice to your mother as to you. Choose between me and this girl."

"I choose—not between you and Lettice," said John, still holding the girl round the waist, "but between revenge and love. And I choose for my mother as well. Come, Lettice, we will go. You shall stay with your brother till we can be married. Cheer up, my darling, it is not you who shall suffer for your father's sin."

"Yes, and for the third and fourth generation," cried his father. "Scripture authority for you."

"There is yet another Scripture," said John, solemnly. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. Think over that. We leave you, your son and the girl to whom you have been a protector for so long. In the solitary winter evenings, when you sit here alone, night after night, with your thoughts, you will remember sometimes the wife and son whom you have thrown away in wild revenge. The very chairs will cry out to you aloud of the innocent girl you have driven away in wrath—the second woman whom you

should have loved. And when you think of the things you have thrown away, remember that across the ocean we shall be all together, waiting only for the day when you will write and bid us come back to you."

"Never," said his father. "Never. Henceforth, I sit alone and trust no man again. Go."

"Shake hands, sir. Let me tell my mother that you have given your hand to her son."

"No," he replied. "You have chosen. I have no wife and no son—I never had—I never will have. Take that girl out of my sight, lest I do her, or you, or myself a mischief."

They went together, Lettice weeping. The door closed behind them, and Mr. Pomeroy was left alone. Down the stairs into the court, noisy with hurrying footsteps; out into the busy and hurrying world, away to the hotel where Will Langton, dressed and in his right mind, which was a penitent one, was waiting for his sister.

Clients came to see Mr. Pomeroy that day, but they could not gain admission to his office. It was empty, and the tenant was in that back room alone, looking out on the wall. In his hand was the packet of letters. His lips were set tight, and his eyes were angry and fixed. There was no repentance, yet, in old John Pomeroy's face, whatever might come later.

"And so you see, Lettice," says John, when Will has told his tale, and John his, all over again, and he and Lettice were sitting side by side, her hand in his, while Will looked on marvelling, "and so it was not my doing at all; and you have not me to thank, but our friend the Frenchman."

"I should like to thank him," Lettice replies. "Do you think you can find him?"

That was not difficult, and the writer of "L'Affaire Kugel"—the account of which made so great a sensation when it appeared in Paris—was that same day captured by John and brought to the hotel, to be introduced to the young English "mees," whose charms he so graphically described in his letter.

M. Henri de Rosnay received Lettice's congratulations in the grand style. John asked him to dinner, and they all four dined in great state and ceremony. It was that part of the conclusion of the drama which one does not put upon the stage, but imagines; the tamely happy part. Who cares

to read about other people's happiness? Who wants to see innocence and content upon the stage? He wrote very nicely about it in a subsequent letter, called "Conclusion of the Affaire Kugel," speaking of the boy's modest demeanour after his unmerited misfortunes; his sister's happiness innocently sparkling in her eyes; the tall young Canadian, in whom, he said, ignorant of his real birth, there existed still the traces of his French ancestry in his bravery, his strength, and his chivalrous devotion to the ravishing "mees." "Who can be surprised," he wrote, "at finding in a Canadian all the virtues which characterise our own race, when we reflect that Canada was once wholly French? These brave highlanders"—he thought the country was alpine—"hardy, like all who dwell upon the slopes and in the valleys of great mountains, are sturdy, pious, and gallant. At the same time, my friend, I must own, has one great, one very great fault. He does not appreciate the wine of our country. He is a 'teetotaller' in the language of England. The bottle of champagne in which I drank health and happiness to the young lady was placed upon the table for my use only. I am invited to visit his estates in Canada. In the interests of your readers I will flinch from nothing. I will even, if that is necessary, brave the voyage across the perilous Atlantic, and risk my scalp among those savage Hurons among whom Atala roved, and of whom Voltaire wrote. Expect, therefore, if I survive, to hear of travels and dangers in the Canadian wilds."

The sentiments of M. de Rosnay were, it may be seen, superior to his geography.

"And are you quite sure—quite, quite sure," asked Lettice, when their guest was gone, "that your mother will welcome me?"

"As sure," said John, "as I am that she is a Christian. And now, my darling, there is only one more thing to do. And that is to be married. Where would you like to be married? Here, in the close and stifling city, or away where we can see green fields and trees and breathe fresh air?"

"If it could be in the country—" said Lettice.

"Then it shall be. We will go away to-morrow morning to Moulsey Priors, where Eli Ramsden will take us in, and we will be married among our own folk—at least, among their graves. There, my dear, before the altar we will forgive the past, and make the old wrongs impossible to be

ever spoken of again. And then, by the very next Allan ship that sails for Canada, we will go back to the dear old place beyond the sea."

"And your father, John?"

His face hardened a little.

"I had forgotten I had a father almost. Lettice, I cannot pretend. I wish it had been otherwise, for my mother's sake, but I have not the feeling for him that I have for her. Remember that I have grown up with her alone, and that I have known him but a short three weeks. I am sorry, but I shall not make myself miserable over what cannot be helped. And he used cruel words to you, my Lettice——"

"John," she said, "you must forget them. Promise faithfully that you will forget them. They must be as if they had never been spoken." Another kiss. "Oh, John! And you have only known me for three weeks. And suppose, John—suppose I should not turn out what you think?"

They were married very soon afterwards in the little village church of Moulsey Priors, whose holy acre holds all the buried Pomeroy's, and Langtons, and Burdacombs. There were no bridesmaids and no wedding-bells. But Eli Ramsden the Quaker was there, and Will Langton gave away his sister.

In Great St. Simon Apostle Mr. Pomeroy sat drawing out his bills, making in them no Deductions at all, either small or large.

CONCLUSION. "SHEPHERDS ALL AND MAIDENS FAIR."

WE are back again, two months later, in Clear Sky Land. It is autumn no longer, but the very heart and middle of winter. Snow everywhere; rivers frozen up; lakes frozen up; the scarlet and crimson leaves of the maples fallen and buried in their white covering; the pines standing up black against the white pall which wraps the sleeping world.

If nature sleeps, man is awake; you hear the lumberer's axe ringing in the forest; the crash of the great trees, as he drags them over roads made navigable, so to speak, by ice and snow; sometimes the quaint old French song of the seventeenth century, which the sturdy descendant of Jacques Cartier sings between his work. They are all from Quebec Province, these stalwart lumberers, and in the summer you may find them at work where the Falls of Montmorenci leap five hundred feet into the round basin below, and work the sawmills, and keep three thousand

people in comfort and laborious ease. If you were on Lake Rousseau now, you would see on either shore the columns of smoke rising, each like an obelisk, but with feathery hanging top, over every farmstead, because there is not a breath of wind in the still air.

It is afternoon, too, which makes the silence deeper. Yet in young John Pomeroy's farm you would hear signs and sounds of work, if you were there. He is in the farmyard, among the cattle; beside him one man is cutting wood, and another vigorously clearing and sweeping—everything in the open has to be done with vigour in Clear Sky Land. There are no idle days on the farm, and when work is scarce, there is play almost fierce as work. You may make a rink over-night, and skate all next day; you may go to the Dee Bank Falls, and run a toboggan down its slopes of ice and snow, till the exercise, and the rush of the air, and the shouting and laughter, make you warmer in your wrappers than any pedestrian on the roads of Old England, where, to-day, the first snow has been followed by a quick thaw and a soft rain, so that everything is enwrapped in a cloud of steam and haze, and men's breath is drawn with difficulty. Or you may bring out a sleigh and drive along the silent highway beneath the splendid trees, on a road far smoother than in any summer path—a road which covers up all the soft places in the corduroys, and substitutes the easy run of the sleigh for the jolting of the wheels.

Presently, John Pomeroy shuts up work for the day and goes home.

The house is warm and bright. Two faces brighten, when he comes in stamping the hard snow from his feet. They are the faces of his wife and his mother. It needs but a look to see that Lettice is happy.

"I for one shall be ready for supper," says John, "as soon as the clock strikes six. Kiss me, Lettice dear. This is better than Carmel Friars, isn't it?"

Then a sleigh drives up. Stephen Burdcomb and his wife.

"Happy Christmas to all," he says. "Girls and the children coming along, presently."

Then a young fellow steps in. Heaven! can this be Will Langton—this boy, filled out in the shoulders, set up and strong, his handsome face flushed with health and strength? No late evenings here; no gas and billiard-rooms; no drink and tobacco.

Light the lamp—close the curtains. It

is Christmas Eve, and we are going to have a pleasant evening.

Another sleigh with tinkling bells.

"Why," said Stephen in his slow way "it's full early for the girls, wife, isn't it?"

Not the girls. A man's step in the passage. John went to see who it was.

Not his father?

Yes, old John Pomeroy himself. He was rubbing his nose with a handful of snow.

"It'll come off," he said, "I know it'll come off. Look at it, John."

John examined the feature.

"It is all right, sir," he said; "and how are you?"

"How are you, John? Shake hands. Glad to see you."

All in the most matter-of-fact way, as if he was just come in from a week's journey. No falling into each other's arms at all; no asking for forgiveness on either side. Not a bit. There was nothing soft about old John Pomeroy.

And as they heard that voice within, the elder and the younger lady sprang from their chairs, and caught each other by the hands.

"Mother," says Lettice, "it is Mr. Pomeroy."

They both tremble and shake.

"Take off those furs, John," says the voice outside. "Ah, and now I'll go in. All well, eh?"

He opens the door. Before him stands his wife, the woman he has not seen for four-and-twenty years!

Stephen Burdacom comes between them.

"I stand by my sister," he began.

"Nonsense, Stephen—how are you? how are you?" replies the man of business, and pushing him aside, holds out both hands to his wife, who falls upon his breast weeping and sobbing, while he whispers something in her ear.

"Kiss me, Lettice, my dear," Mr. Pomeroy goes on, holding out one disengaged hand to the girl. "Hope you find marriage a happy condition of life. Hope your husband treats you well. How are you, Will? And now we will sit down, and talk, and be comfortable. Seasonable weather, Stephen?"

Lettice and Will looked at him with furtive astonishment. This Mr. Pomeroy? He to propose that people should sit down, and talk, and be comfortable? Was he transformed, then?

"Surprised to see me, eh? Well, Lettice, my dear"—he called her for a second time "my dear"—were things real?—"when you went away the home grew uncomfortable. After six or seven years of you about the place one felt lonely. That's the reason. That's all. How's your farm getting on, John?"

All the time he held his wife's hand in his. No sentiment at all about the man. Nothing soft in old John Pomeroy.

"Let us all sit down," he repeated, "and be comfortable."

"I think there is something more, sir," said John, quietly.

"What a persistent boy that is of yours, my dear," he remarked to his wife; "he must have been a sad trouble to you all these years. Well—there was something more. And what that was, John, your mother knows already, and that's enough. He's a fine boy, too, wife, and, on the whole, just the son I should have liked. Well—what next? How do you like Lettice, my dear?"

His wife lifted her tearful face and smiled.

"I will answer you as you answered John," she said. "Lettice knows, and that's enough."

"Ah; anything else?" He looked in his quick combative way at Stephen, as if perhaps that worthy man might have an objection or two in his mind.

"Supper," said Stephen.

"That's business-like. That's to the point," said Mr. Pomeroy. "John, my son, I believe I told you, when I last saw you, that I should never forgive you.—Kiss me again, Lettice, my dear. You made a most sensible observation about choosing between love and revenge, for which I am obliged to you.—You also quoted a very remarkable passage from the Bible, for which I am more obliged to you. I said I should never forgive you. Said I had no wife and no son. Well, you must make Deductions—Large Deductions."

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